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THE

# LIFE

OF

# ROBERT, LORD CLIVE:

COLLECTED FROM THE FAMILY PAPERS

COMMUNICATED BY

THE EARL OF POWIS.

BY

MAJOR-GENERAL

SIR JOHN MALCOLM, G.C.B. F.R.S. &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

WITH A PORTRAIT AND MAP.

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# MEMOIRS

OF

# LORD CLIVE.

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## CHAPTER XV.

Difficult as was the situation in which Lord Clive was placed when he adopted those active measures to remedy the abuses in the civil administration of Bengal, which have been already described, a much more arduous task awaited him; that of carrying into execution the positive orders he had received from the Directors, to reduce the allowances of the officers of the army of that presidency. This excited a spirit of mutinous defection from their duty in that body, which it required all the energy and decision of Clive to subdue. The subject has importance in various ways, and in none more than as it is so singularly illustrative of his character. To make it clearly understood, it will be use-

ful to give a concise account* of the whole transaction.

The plea for the mutinous defection from their duty of a great proportion of the officers of the Bengal army in 1766, was the reduction of double batta, which was first introduced after the battle of Plassey, by the Nabob Jaffier Ally Cawn, who granted it to the English force, of which, according to treaty, he was to pay the expenses. Lord Clive, at the period of this grant, warned the army, that it must be considered as an indulgence on the part of the Nabob, which the Company would not be inclined to continue. It happened as he anticipated; for, when the Nabob assigned certain districts to the Company, in order to defray the expenses of the army, the Court of Directors, unwilling to adopt so expensive a precedent, issued the most positive orders†, that double batta should be abolished. These orders were several times repeated, but the remonstrances of the army had hitherto prevented the Governor and Council carrying them into execution. In 1764, when Lord Clive accepted for the second

* This account is an abstract of a narrative of the mutiny, written by the late Sir Henry Strachey, and which forms Appendix 1st to the 9th Report of the Committee of Secresy of the House of Commons, A. D. 1773.

† Vide Ibid. Appendix, No. 1. a. fo. 699.

time the government of Bengal, this was one of the points most strongly pressed* upon him by the Court of Directors.

The whole army had been formed into regiments, and divided into three brigades, according to a plan of Clive. The first, under Lieutenant Colonel Sir R. Fletcher, garrisoned Monghyr; the third brigade, under Colonel Sir Robert Barker, was cantoned at Bankipore; and the second, under Colonel Smith, was stationed at Allahabad, at the request of the Emperor of Delhi and Sujah Dowlah, to keep the Mahrattas in check. The peace which had been established, and the regimenting the troops, offered a favourable opportunity for carrying into effect the positive commands of the Directors; and accordingly an order was issued by the Select Committee, directing that, from the 1st of January, 1766, double batta to the European officers of the army should cease, except at Allahabad, where, on account of the distance from Calcutta, it was continued to the second brigade, as long as it should be actually in the field; but when in cantonments, that corps was to be reduced to single batta. At Patna and Monghyr, the troops were allowed half batta when not on service; while those at the presidency were put

* The Court's orders for this reduction, dated the 11th of June, 1764, are very positive and peremptory.

upon the same footing as the troops on the coast of Coromandel, who drew no batta, except when actually marching or serving in the field.

In reply to the remonstrances of the officers, the positive commands of the Company were stated; and, on the appointed day, the reduction took place. Though the officers seemed to acquiesce, secret meetings were held in each brigade, at which a general resignation of their commissions was proposed. This plan was originally formed at Monghyr, in December* 1765, or January 1766, and, when matured, proposed to the second and third brigades. The second, at first, considering themselves as engaged in actual service by being on the frontier, declined taking an active part; but these sentiments of honour soon gave way to the general infatuation, and nearly two hundred commissions of captains and subalterns were, in a short time collected, to be placed, on the 1st of June, in the hands of the officers commanding the respective brigades; though it was agreed that they should offer to serve as volunteers till the 15th, to give time for an answer to be received from Lord Clive and the Select Committee. The officers combined in this proceeding, bound themselves by an oath to secresy, and

* The order was expected some time before it was issued.

to preserve, at the hazard of their own lives, the life of any one of their body who might be condemned by a court-martial to death. In order to avoid the charge of mutiny, they determined to refuse the usual advance of pay for the month of June. Each officer bound himself separately by a bond of 500*l.*, not to accept his commission again, if double batta was not restored. And subscriptions were entered into for those who might be cashiered. To this subscription several civilians were said to have contributed.

The advance of between fifty and sixty thousand Mahrattas towards Corah, about one hundred and fifty miles from Allahabad, inspired those in the plot with fresh hopes of success, as it appeared that the services of one brigade, at least, would be required, at the very time fixed for the general resignation. Colonel Smith, who commanded on the frontier, was ordered to encamp at Serajapoor, with the whole of the second brigade, except the European regiment, who were not to march on account of the great heat.

Such was the state of affairs in March, 1766, when Lord Clive and General Carnac set out from Calcutta, to regulate with Mr. Sykes (the Resident at the Nabob's court) the collections of the revenue at Moorshedabad and Patna for the

ensuing year; to receive from Sujah Dowlah the balance of the fifty lacs of rupees stipulated by the treaty of August, 1765, and to form alliances with the princes of the Empire against the Mahrattas.

In April, 1766, Lord Clive arrived at Moorshedabad, when he received a letter, dated 19th April, from Mr. Verelst and the Council at Calcutta, enclosing the remonstrance of the third brigade relative to the reduction of the batta, signed by nine captains, twelve lieutenants, and twenty ensigns.* The Board having declined answering it without obtaining Lord Clive's sentiments thereon, Lord Clive, in a letter dated 22d April, 1766†, recommended that it should be sent to Sir R. Barker for his information, as the Board could take no notice of any paper brought before them, except through the commanding officer. But lest it should have been regularly transmitted through the commanding officer, he proposed that the same answer should be given as had been on a former remonstrance;

* Vide 9th Rep. of Com. of Secresy, App. No. 1. fo. 699. This remonstrance sets forth the high rates of supplies at a distance from the coast, objections of servants to act except in one capacity, and various expenses and hardships entailed by their situation, and aggravated by the reduction of allowances.

† Ibid. No. 2. fo. 700.

remarking, at the same time, that many lieutenants of the Sepoy battalions had signed, who, having an extra allowance of two rupees per diem, could not be considered as having any great hardship to complain of. Hitherto no suspicion had been entertained of the intended resignation. On the 28th of April, Lord Clive received a letter from Sir Robert Fletcher, dated 25th April, which contained the first intimation on the subject.* He stated that the officers seemed determined to make another attempt for the recovery of batta; that their commissions were to be sent to him at the end of the month; but that they would continue to serve in May as volunteers. To explain the matter further, he enclosed a letter from Sir R. Barker, 21st April†, informing him of a quarrel among some officers of the third brigade, which had developed a serious combination, which, he had reason to believe, was not confined to that part of the army. Sir R. Fletcher also transmitted his answer‡ to Sir R. Barker, dated the 24th April, in which he states that, though he has for some days heard that the officers had thoughts of resuming their demand, he could not think it deserved much notice; observing, at the same time, that should it prove that they offered to

* Vide 9th Rep. of Com. of Secresy, App. No. 4. fo. 702.
† Ibid. No. 5. fo. 702. ‡ Ibid. No. 6. fo. 702.

resign, as Lord Clive would probably not alter his resolution, it would afford him an opportunity of "picking out the best officers, and getting rid of the useless ones."

To this communication Lord Clive replied on the 28th April*, 1766, approving of Sir Robert Fletcher's proceedings, and declaring his determination, that any officer who offered his resignation should be immediately dismissed, and never restored to the service. The quarrel among the officers alluded to in Sir R. Barker's letter, arose from Ensign Davis refusing to give up his commission to Captain Duff, which, connected with the result of a Court of Inquiry, led to a discovery of the whole of their proceedings. In consequence of this premature disclosure of their combination, the 1st of May was fixed on instead of the 1st of June, for the resignation of their commissions, with a view of preventing Lord Clive and the Committee having time to counteract the execution of their intention. A letter signed "Full Batta," dated 15th April †, addressed to Captain Carnac (who was with Lord Clive), was received about the same time, informing him of the plan of resigning, and calling upon him to send his commission to some friend of his, and to sign the subscription for

* Vide 9th Rep. of Com. of Secresy, App. No. 7. fo. 702.
† Ibid. No. 8. fo. 702.

such officers as might be turned out of the service. The contents of this letter, being communicated to Lord Clive, convinced him that the combination was general; nor was he without apprehension that the troops might follow the example of their officers, and a general mutiny ensue. He was, however, determined not to concede; and resolved to leave Moorshedabad as soon as his important business would allow, and to reach Monghyr before the 15th of May. In conjunction with General Carnac and Mr. Sykes, he despatched an express to the Council at Calcutta, dated the 29th April *, informing them of the proposed resignation, and desiring them to write to Madras, in order that all officers and cadets that could be spared from that presidency should be held in readiness to embark for Bengal at the shortest notice, promising them rank according to their standing. Alluding to the Bengal officers, he observes, in this letter, "Such a spirit must at all hazards be suppressed at the birth, unless we determine upon seeing the government of these provinces pass from the civil into the hands of the military department." In the same letter he desired that the Presidency of Fort St. George should be informed of the approach of the Mahrattas, of the

* Vide 9th Rep. of Com. of Secresy, App. No. 9. fo. 708.

number of the officers who had placed their commissions at the disposal of the combination (being then one hundred and thirty); and he concludes, by stating the necessity of the Committee at Calcutta coming to an absolute determination that no officer now resigning shall ever hereafter hold any place or station in the East India Company's service. The Council sent off a despatch to Fort St. George * to the above effect. Lord Clive wrote also to Colonel Smith, Sir R. Barker, and Sir Robert Fletcher, enclosing a copy of his letter to the Council, and giving those officers leave to make his opinions known to their respective corps, who, he still hoped, when they knew his resolution not to yield to their threats, would change their conduct. From not having heard from Colonel Smith and Sir R. Barker, he was in hopes, as appears by a letter to Mr. Verelst (2d May), that the officers, finding the Committee steady in their resolution, would not venture to brave the consequences. He soon, however, received a letter from Sir R. Barker, dated 27th April, 1766 †, stating what he had discovered, in consequence of the Court of Inquiry respecting the fire at Bankipore; that he had sent Captain Duff and Ensign Davis prisoners to Calcutta, and would

* Vide 9th Rep. of Com. of Secresy, App. No. 10. fo. 703.
† Ibid. No. 12. fo. 734.

send those who were active in the combination there too, as any trial of them by their comrades would be mere trifling; intimating also, that the civilians at Calcutta were supposed to have subscribed in aid of this combination to a large amount. To this Lord Clive replied *, 2d May, 1766, approving of what he had done, desiring him to arrest such officers as he thought might be tried for mutiny, till a court martial of field officers could be summoned. "The ringleaders," he observed, "of this affair must suffer the severest punishment that martial law can inflict, else there is an end of discipline in the army, and of authority in the East India Company over all their servants!!" Similar letters were sent to Sir R. Fletcher and Colonel Smith.† In one of these letters he takes notice of certain inflammatory anonymous letters, and says, that if he could discover their authors, his utmost endeavours should be used "to have them shot." On the 4th of May‡, he received a letter from Sir R. Fletcher, enclosing one signed by forty-two of his officers, complaining of the hardships to which they were subjected by the reduction of their batta, and enclosing

* Vide 9th Rep. of Com. of Secresy, App. No. 13. fo. 704.

† Ibid. No. 14. fo. 704.

‡ Vide Letter, 1st May. No. 17. fo. 705. No. 18. fo. 705.

their commissions, but informing him at the same time of their intention to serve without pay until the 15th of May.* He immediately wrote to Calcutta, directing that officers should be sent for from Fort St. George, and the free merchants at Calcutta be requested to assist. On the 5th of May, a letter was received from Sir R. Barker†, of the 30th April, informing Lord Clive, that on the 29th of April his officers had informed him of their intention to resign on the 1st of May; that he had assembled them, and informed them of the crime they were committing, and the ruin they were bringing on themselves; but that they had answered, "that they were solemnly engaged with the other brigades, and could not be off." Sir Robert states in this letter his apprehension about the resolution of the men at Monghyr to mutiny, and mentions that one lac and forty thousand rupees (16,000*l.*) was said to be subscribed for the officers, by gentlemen at Calcutta. These circumstances Lord Clive communicated to the Council‡, requesting them to endeavour to discover the civilians who had granted such encouragement to the army in their mutiny.

* Vide 9th Rep. of Com. of Secresy, Letter 4th May, App. No. 21. fo. 706.

† Ibid. No. 22. fo. 706.

‡ Vide Letter 5th May, No. 23. fo. 706.

Directions were also sent to Sir R. Fletcher * to be on his guard against any disorders on the part of the troops, and to have every thing necessary for detaching them in small parties. Boats were also ordered to be provided for sending the officers, at twenty-four hours' notice, to Calcutta. On the 1st of May, Sir R. Barker received a letter from Mr. Robertson, the Field-Adjutant, enclosing the commissions of the officers of the third brigade, which Sir Robert returned to them, with an expression of his resolution to put the severity of military law in execution, in case any of them should misbehave. He wrote to Lord Clive †, informing him of what he had done, and that he had directed Mr. Robertson and three others to proceed instantly as prisoners to Calcutta. Mr. Robertson claimed exemption from military law, on the plea that he had resigned; but nevertheless he was obliged to comply with the orders. Affairs now becoming critical, Lord Clive determined to set off with all expedition for Monghyr; and on the 6th of May, leaving the business at Moorshedabad to the care of Mr. Sykes, he and General Carnac left Mulajyl, sending forward such officers as he had been able to collect at so short a notice, and on whom he could rely.‡

* Vide 9th Rep. of Com. of Secresy, Letter 5th May, App. No. 24. fo. 707.

† Ibid. No. 27. fo. 707. ‡ Ibid. Nos. 28. and 30. fo. 708.

Finding, by a letter he received on the road from Sir R. Fletcher, that the officers still remained determined in their purpose, and that a correspondence was begun by them to induce the Madras officers to refuse to come to the assistance of Government, Lord Clive* ordered that all private letters between Calcutta and Madras should be stopped, and directed Sir R. Fletcher to secure the assistance of the serjeants and native officers†, in case of any appearance of mutiny among the men.‡ In a letter to Sir R. Barker, dated 8th May, 1766, Lord Clive, alluding to the report just received of the determination of the officers to persevere, observes, —

"Will men, so abandoned to all sense of honour, and who still persevere in supporting acts of mutiny and desertion, when they have abandoned one point, cease there? History can furnish but few instances of that nature. For my own part, I must see the soldiers' bayonets levelled at my throat, before I can be induced to give way; and then, not so much for the preservation of my own life, as the temporary salvation of the Company: temporary only it can be, for I shall think Bengal in the utmost danger,

* Vide 9th Rep. of Com. of Secresy, App. No. 29. fo. 708.
† Ibid. No. 31. fo. 708.
‡ Ibid. No. 32. fo. 708.

when we are reduced to the necessity of submitting the civil power to the mercy of men who have gone lengths that will frighten and astonish all England.

"With me it is beyond a doubt, that if the officers do not resolve to submit, and acknowledge their crime, ruin and destruction must be equally their lot, whether they succeed or not; and if arguments of this kind can make no impression, none will. I cannot help thinking more evil is still intended."

In the mean time, the Council had resolved that all commissions tendered should be accepted, and the officer tendering them immediately sent to Calcutta. On applying to the free merchants to come forward to do duty as officers on the present emergency, two only would accept commissions, which confirmed the suspicions that the greater part of them approved the conduct of the officers, even if they had not entered into a subscription to support the combination.

Advice was received from Colonel Smith, that the Mahrattas were in motion. It appeared that he was still unacquainted with the intended resignation of his officers. Lord Clive, however, in his answer * contemplating this act, authorised

* Vide 9th Rep. of Com. of Secresy, App. No. 38. fo. 780.

him to enter into alliance with the neighbouring princes; and, should he find himself reduced to the utmost extremity, but not otherwise, to make terms with the malecontents. The officers who had been sent forward by Lord Clive, on their arrival at Monghyr, endeavoured to impress those who had resigned with a sense of the enormity of their conduct; informing them that Lord Clive was coming, determined not to yield to them; and remarking strongly on their ingratitude towards a person who had lately given up 70,000*l.**, to form a fund for invalids and widows.

* A legacy of 70,000*l.* was bequeathed by Meer Jaffier Aly Khan, Nawab of Bengal, in 1765, to Lord Clive, and paid by his Lordship, in the year 1766, into the Company's treasury at Fort William, to run at interest at the rate of 8 per cent., as an annual fund for the support of European officers and soldiers, who may be disabled or decayed in the Company's service in Bengal, and for the widows of officers and soldiers who may die on service there. 8th June, 1766.

The Company extended this donation afterwards to the benefit of all invalided, disabled, or superannuated officers and soldiers, and the widows of such officers and soldiers as may die in their service in any of their settlements in the East Indies, pursuant to an agreement stipulated between them and Lord Clive in the year 1770, by which the former establishment of shares was altered to the present moieties or proportions specified as follows: —

All commissioned or warrant officers shall have half the ordinary stated pay they enjoyed while in service.

Serjeants belonging to the artillery shall receive 9*d.* per day, and such as have lost a limb 1*s.* per day: private men of

The officers replied, that it was impossible for them now to retract. They stated that Sir R. Fletcher had never communicated to them Lord Clive's donation to the army; and concluded by accusing Sir Robert as the originator of the whole plan for resisting the orders of government. On the 13th of May, the European soldiers got under arms, intending to follow their officers; but the appearance of Captain Smith with the sepoy battalion restored order; and when Sir R. Fletcher addressed them, and distributed money among them, they informed him, that they had been assured that he was to head them; but as that was not the case, they would return to their duty. The officers offered to assist, but were ordered to quit the garrison immediately. On the 15th of May, Lord Clive arrived at Monghyr, and received the account of past proceedings from Sir R. Fletcher, who added, that he had known of the combination of the officers since *January*, and had seemed to approve of their schemes, that nothing might be done with-

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the artillery, 6*d.* per day; and such as lose a limb, 9*d.* per day.

All other non-commissioned officers and private men shall receive 4½*d.* per day.—23d July, 1771.

Vide Parliamentary Papers, A.D. 1773, vol. iv. report 9. p. 535.

out his knowledge. It is here to be remarked, that the date of Sir Robert's letter, which first intimated any thing about the resignation of the officers, was the 25th of *April*. Whatever were Lord Clive's sentiments on this communication, he did not think fit either to express his dissatisfaction, or take any steps at the moment. Immediately on his arrival he addressed the soldiers, explaining the crime of their officers, and mentioning his own donation to the European part of the army. He ordered double pay to be issued to the native troops for May and June.

At Bankipore*, where Sir Robert Barker commanded, neither officers nor men behaved in so violent a manner as at Monghyr. More of the officers remained with their corps, and there was no appearance of mutiny among the troops.

At Serajipoor, Colonel Smith, who was daily in expectation of a battle, was placed in a peculiarly difficult situation. On the 6th of May, all the officers in camp, except two, requested leave to resign, some immediately, and others from the first of June. The Colonel immediately ordered the first to proceed to Calcutta, and informed the latter that they should have an answer before the time they had fixed;

* A station adjoining the city of Patna.

remarking to both, that he should be obliged to place that confidence in the black troops which he had before their recent conduct reposed in the zeal of his own countrymen. The officers answered this, by complaining of the attempt to asperse their honour; to which Colonel Smith replied, that the first point of honour in a soldier was military obedience, and repeated his order, that all those who had offered to resign immediately should leave camp, and go to the presidency. Lieutenant Vertue having been refused permission to resign, and leaving his commission on Colonel Smith's table, was ordered into arrest, to be tried by a court-martial at Patna. The officers of the European regiment who were stationed at Allahabad declared their intention of setting out for Calcutta on the 20th of May, and behaved in so disorderly a manner, that Major Smith, who commanded that fortress, would have ordered them all into arrest, if he could have depended on the men; but, as there was some idea that the soldiers would assist the officers, he sent for an old battalion of sepoys, which had been long under his command. These troops having performed a march of one hundred and four miles from Serajipoor, in fifty-four hours, arrived in camp a few hours before the officers were on the point of leaving the garri-

son. With their assistance Major Smith compelled the officers to make apologies and submission for the insult they had offered to his authority, and he contented himself with sending off six to Calcutta. Colonel Smith at Serajipoor, pursuing the same vigorous measures, had secured tranquillity at that station, by sending half his officers to Calcutta.

On the 20th of May, Lord Clive arrived at Bankipore; many of the officers who had resigned still continuing to do duty were restored to their commissions. The officers who had been ordered to Calcutta having attempted to assemble on the road, and disturbance being apprehended, some detachments of sepoys were sent to compel them to continue their journey. The principal leaders of this mutinous opposition to authority being now arrested, and ordered to prepare for their trial, repentance and humiliation became general, the objects of the combination were defeated, their union and strength broken, and those who were restored were compelled to sign a contract to serve the Company for three years, and to give a year's notice of their intention to quit the service. Messrs. Duffield and Robertson of the third brigade, who were ringleaders, on being ordered to embark for England, protested against the order, and blockaded themselves in their

houses till the ships for England left Calcutta; but, on their making their appearance, they were seized and sent off to Madras, and from thence to England.

Though there was no doubt of the assistance which the military derived from the civilians, yet from the precaution taken by the latter, of sending their letters by private posts in disguised hands, it was difficult to substantiate the charge against any individuals. Mr. Higginson, however, the sub-secretary to the Council, and Mr. Grindal in the secretary's office, having the charge brought home to them, were dismissed. Captain Stainforth, accused of having expressed a determination of assassinating Lord Clive, was tried and condemned to be cashiered. When authority was fully vindicated, as much lenity was shown by Lord Clive as was consistent with the public safety to those concerned in this combination. Out of six officers tried and found guilty of mutiny, not one was sentenced to death. A defect of the Mutiny Act for the East India Company's service, in omitting the contract between the officer and Company, might, it was thought by many, render the legality of the proceedings doubtful; and this inclined the members of the court-martial to mercy. Lieutenant Vertue, on this ground, refused to plead; nevertheless, he



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was put on his trial, condemned, and cashiered with infamy.

Sir Robert Fletcher, who was publicly accused by many of the officers who resigned, and more particularly by Captain Goddard*, of having been the instigator of the whole plan, was tried by a court martial, found guilty, and cashiered. It appeared in evidence for the prosecution, that Sir Robert Fletcher was acquainted throughout with the design of the general resignation; and that he, in fact, proposed it, as a scheme by which the officers might recover their double batta.†

* Captain Goddard became afterwards a very distinguished officer. He commanded the force that Warren Hastings sent to the relief of the settlement of Bombay in 1778.

† It is not unworthy of remark, that Sir Robert Fletcher, thus cashiered by sentence of a court-martial for mutiny, was, in 1775, appointed, by the Court of Directors, Commander-in-chief of the army at Madras. There he headed the opposition which set aside Lord Pigot from the government of Madras in 1776.

No mention is made in the text of John Petrie as one of the ringleaders of the mutiny of the officers of the Bengal army in 1766.

This man was sent home by Lord Clive on that account with a rope about his neck; but so much do things depend on the party who may be in power, or influence, with the Court of Directors, that this very John Petrie obtained an appointment high in the civil service at Bengal, through the interest of his friends the Johnstones, who were in opposition to Lord Clive's party in England.

Such is the detail of a combination of officers, which threatened with the most imminent danger the newly established authority of the Company over the rich provinces of Bengal and Bahar. Never did Lord Clive display more prominently that superior knowledge of human nature, that intimate acquaintance with the feelings and motives of military men, or that firmness and decision by which alone those can be kept in subordination, than on this trying occasion. He never hesitated nor swerved from the resolutions he adopted on the first moment that he learnt the extent of the combination formed against the government. He was well supported by the members of the committee, of which General Carnac, commander of the troops, was a member; and with the conduct of the senior officer of the army, Colonel R. Smith, who commanded one of the brigades, as well as of Sir Robert Barker, who commanded another, he had every reason to be satisfied.

The high opinion he entertained of Sir R. Fletcher as a gallant officer, his apparent zeal and constant communications, long misled Lord Clive into a confidence on his co-operation, which, had he been a man of less talent and less prompt decision, would have occasioned a ruinous compromise of the public interests. But that and all the other evil consequences which this alarming

combination threatened, were subdued by his presence, and by the personal display of that calm and unyielding courage, which, in military bodies, extorts, even from those it subdues, respect and admiration.

During these proceedings Clive's mind appears, from his whole correspondence, public and private, to have been resolutely fixed on the accomplishment of the objects for which he abandoned ease and affluence in his native country; namely, those of restoring discipline in the military, and order in the civil, branches of the service. But we are able to trace the motives under which he acted on this momentous occasion more minutely in his private than in his public communications. From his letters to General Carnac and others it is evident that Lord Clive cherished, even at the moment he was reducing them to obedience, the kindest feelings towards the officers of the Bengal army. In one to the General he makes some mild but judicious remarks upon the warm language which his friend had used in representing the discontent of the officers under his orders (prior to the combination) at their being superseded by Captain Macpherson, whom the Council-Board at Calcutta had admitted to the rank of captain in a mode which the Bengal officers deemed injurious to their interests. "I am concerned," Lord Clive

observes in this letter*, "at the warmth of your letter to the Board. Although they have used both you and me extremely ill, and, as individuals, deserved our utmost contempt, yet I think there is some indulgence due to their stations. That they have acted unjustly, as well as contrary to the known rules of the army, in the case of Captain Macpherson, cannot be doubted; yet I cannot think the officers ought to carry matters so far as to insist upon a Governor and Council retracting what they have done. There must be an absolute power lodged somewhere, and that certainly is in the hands of the Governor and Council, until the pleasure of the Court of Directors be known. However, if the account of Captain Macpherson is proved true, I will be answerable that he shall act as youngest of the corps he has been introduced to, and take care that no such unjust proceedings shall be countenanced in future. I hope this will prove satisfactory to the officers, who, by their gallant behaviour, are entitled to every mark of attention and distinction from the Company."

This kind and friendly remonstrance, on the part of Lord Clive, had not the desired effect: on the contrary, it appears by the following letter to his respected friend General Lawrence, that the resentment of the officers at this act of

* 20th May, 1766.

government gave rise to demands of a character that showed how much a spirit of insubordination had spread throughout the Bengal army.

"I* should have done myself the pleasure of writing to you sooner, if I had not deferred it from day to day, in hopes of being able to entertain you with some important news from camp. There has, however, but one material circumstance happened, and that I am sure will astonish you. Some time ago, the Governor in Council here permitted Captain Whichcot to dispose of his commission to Captain Macpherson, and appointed the latter to the same rank among the captains, that Whichcot held. Upon a representation of this grievance, Macpherson was ordered to take rank as youngest captain; but the military gentlemen, still dissatisfied, thought fit to remonstrate against his being appointed to any other than that of youngest ensign. Such an unreasonable request could not be granted, and the consequence of the refusal has been, it seems, a general association among the officers, captains as well as subalterns; the former thinking it incumbent on them to support what they are pleased to suppose the rights of the latter. The import of this association is, that all the officers, captains, lieutenants and

* Letter to General Lawrence, dated Calcutta, 1st June, 1766.

ensigns are to resign their commissions, unless Macpherson be degraded to the lowest rank! Civil departments, in every state, will now and then entertain abuses, in spite of the most vigilant magistracy; but I appeal, my dear General, to your memory, whether, in the long experience you have had in military affairs, a single instance can be given of a corps of officers, in time of actual service and an enemy in the field, uniting in a combination of this nature. To me it appears so repugnant to every regulation of discipline, so destructive of that subordination, without which no army can exist, and above all, so disobedient to the Mutiny Act and Articles of War, that I am determined to refuse them the liberty of resigning (I mean those at least whose contract with the Company is not expired), and break them, or perhaps proceed to greater extremities by a general court-martial. The expediency of my plan of regimenting the forces, and appointing the proper proportion of field officers, appears now, I think, in a stronger light than ever; and in consequence of this mutiny (must I call it?) I have already ordered all the corps which I brought from Europe to march up to camp, whither I intend to be myself, as soon as the interior policy of affairs will permit. To say truth, every principle of government in this presidency has within these few months past

been so debauched, that one can hardly determine upon the branches which ought first to be lopped. Pray tell Mr. Palk that I do not write to him by this post because my politics are not yet ripe for communication, and I consider this as a letter to you both."

Some time before the combination of the officers took place, several efforts were made by Clive to enforce the principles of subordination, which, we find from his private letters, were greatly relaxed in all ranks. He appears to have grounded his chief hopes of restoring and maintaining discipline on his plan of giving shape to the army, by forming it into corps and brigades, and placing it under officers of rank and reputation; but his difficulty was to keep those in order who had been selected to command others. This is strongly evinced in a letter to Sir R. Fletcher, who, while he recommended the introduction of better discipline, objected to serve under Sir R. Barker.

"I have received your letter*," Lord Clive observes, "and agree entirely with you in the necessity of introducing discipline and subordination among the officers and soldiers in the service of the Company, although I see no such difficulty in bringing this about, since those who

* Letter to Sir R. Fletcher, 28th June, 1765.

decline complying with the regulations which are to be made will most certainly be dismissed the service.

"I must confess it gives me much concern, that you, who preach up the necessity of discipline and reformation, should be the first to act in contradiction to your own declared sentiments, by declining to serve under Sir R. Barker; but what surprises me still more is, that you who have been removed from one settlement to another, and have actually superseded numbers, should object to serve under an officer, who was a captain when you were only an ensign or volunteer on the same establishment. Without disparagement to your merit, which I shall always be ready to acknowledge, it is not in the eyes of the world equal to that of Sir R. Barker, who has had more time and more opportunities than you possibly could of distinguishing himself. You think he should have remained in the artillery. That would not have hindered him from commanding you, upon all occasions when you were both upon service together. Indeed his rank is so high, that he must always command wherever he is, if Carnac or Smith be not present, which may seldom happen; except, indeed, by being an artillery officer, he should be thought improper to command the whole; and by that means an officer of his rank and merit

would be deprived of an opportunity of acting in the field at all. In short, every one who knows Sir R. Barker esteems him equal to any command, both military and artillery; and as a proof of what I affirm, General Lawrence, Mr. Palk, and the Nabob* pressed me, in the strongest terms, to have Sir R. Barker; promising that he should have both rank and command next to Colonel Campbell.

"I am persuaded that when you reflect upon the merits and pretensions which Sir Robert Barker has to the Company's favour, you will not hesitate a moment to give up the point. If you consider that Mr. Sulivan alone sent you out, in that distinguished station which you now possess, and that his interest is at best become a very precarious one, I am sure your own good sense will prevail upon you not to oppose my appointment; for I must frankly tell you, that, though I am really inclined to do you every service in my power, yet, in this instance, you must not expect the same indulgence from me which you have received from General Carnac."

In a subsequent letter he states his disapprobation of Sir Robert Fletcher's receipt of a large present from the King, subsequent to the arrival

* Mahommed Ali, at Madras.

of the covenants, by which all such sources of emolument were prohibited to public servants.

"* With regard to the lac of rupees received from the King, I think you ought not to have received it in the manner you did, for three reasons; first, on account of the King's distresses and poverty; secondly, because General Carnac had never received one farthing from his Majesty, whom he had laid under obligations much beyond what you had rendered him; and, lastly, because you knew it was the intent of the Court of Directors that no presents should be received, after the receipt of the covenants, without the consent of the Governor and Council. Indeed, most of the gentlemen of council are under a very severe censure for their accepting of presents after the receipt of the covenants."

Lord Clive appears, from some of his letters at this period, not to have been quite satisfied with some parts of the conduct of his friend General Carnac.

"You will observe," he writes in a letter * to Mr. Sumner, "that the General does not mention a word about the conduct of the officers; and I should not be surprised to find them in a disposition, not only to insist upon Macpherson's appointment, by the Governor and Council be-

* Letter to Sir R. Fletcher, under date 6th August, 1765.
† Letter to Mr. Sumner, dated 7th July, 1765.

ing set aside, but also to refuse signing the covenants and submitting to the reduction of batta. However, I am determined totally to subdue this mutinous and unsoldierlike behaviour, which may easily be effected with the assistance of the field officers, as soon as we have concluded a peace with Sujah Dowlah."

In a letter written next day to the General, from which I have already quoted, he begs him, if uneasy under the part he is to act, to let the whole weight fall upon *his* shoulders; concluding with reference to the recent violent representations in the case of the appointment of Captain Macpherson.*

"If the officers of the army," he observes, "think it concerns their honour to support and countenance so very unmilitary a proceeding, I think it still more concerns my character and reputation to support the dignity and power of the Governor and Council."

Writing to Mr. Verelst † a few days afterwards, he comments on the long silence of the General, and his feelings as a military man, in the following terms: —

"I have at last received a letter from Carnac, copy of which has been sent you. However, his silence upon particular subjects convinces

* Letter to General Carnac under date 8th July, 1765

† Letter to Mr. Verelst, dated 11th July, 1765.

me, he has too much given way to the warmth of his passions; and much I fear, he thinks too highly of the services, dignity, and authority of the military.

"With regard to the first, although a soldier myself, I am of opinion that we imbibe such arbitrary notions, by the absolute power which we are obliged to exercise towards the officers and soldiers, in order to keep up subordination and military discipline, so essentially necessary for the good of the service, that we shall always be endeavouring to encroach upon the civil power, if they do not repeatedly make use of that authority with which they are invested; and I appeal to yourself, whether the commanding officers, whoever they were, since my departure from India, until my second arrival in this quarter, have not, by their conduct, endeavoured to impress upon the minds of the princes of the country, that the power was rather in the Commander-in-chief of the army, than in the Governor and Council. Indeed, a few months more of Mr. Spencer's government would have made them Lords paramount."

Colonel Richard Smith, who was next in rank to General Carnac, and with whose decided conduct, during the combination of the officers, Lord Clive appears to have been fully satisfied, was evidently considered by his Lordship (with

whom he had been a passenger in the same ship from England) as a person that required to be kept in as good order, as he was disposed to keep others. To preserve the means of doing this, Clive had acted towards him with a reserve that gave offence; and the Colonel, in the concluding paragraph of an able letter *, upon the future arrangements of the army observes:—

"Your Lordship well knows what public-spirited motives influenced me to return to India; and by this time, I flatter myself, you are convinced, that I am determined religiously to observe the same uniform conduct which has been my principal object. Your late letters to me seem to breathe that same air of confidence, which only could first prevail on me to think of quitting England. Why there has been any interruption to it, your Lordship can only tell; for I declare myself an utter stranger to the cause. I have been induced to open myself thus frankly, from some conversations that passed with General Carnac on this subject. It remains now in your breast, whether my correspondence with your Lordship, in future, shall be simply from the Colonel to the Commander-in-chief, *or*, whether I shall go beyond that line, and offer my own sentiments on such matters

* Vide letter from Colonel Richard Smith to Lord Clive under date 31st August, 1765.

regarding the public service, as from time to time may occur."

No notice was taken by Lord Clive of these remarks; but, on their being repeated, he replied, in that explicit and manly tone which was characteristic of his mind. He evinced, on all such occasions, an equal disdain for evasion, or the concealment of his sentiments.

"I had resolved," he observes*, "to give you an answer to your letter of the 31st August last; but, when I considered the explanation required, could neither afford you pleasure, or be of any service to the Company in your present situation, I determined to remain silent upon so disagreeable a subject. But as you have called upon me a second time, I will answer you with a frankness free of all disguise.

"Your behaviour towards Colonel Peach at the Cape, in reprimanding him for not paying his respects to me through you, was, in my opinion, assuming an authority which did not belong to you; and tended to the lessening of mine. Lieutenant Wenthorp, after he had obtained my consent for returning to India, because he did not apply to you first, was discouraged in such a manner, that he chose rather to forego all the advantages he might obtain from

* Vide letter to Colonel Richard Smith from Lord Clive, under date 15th February, 1766.

my promises, than risk the consequences of your displeasure. Such an authority assumed, and resentment expressed, could not but give me great offence. The warmth shown and dissatisfaction expressed, (because you was not looked upon as one of the Committee, and allowed to sign the letter of instructions to Captain Abercrombie,) by immediately connecting yourself with a person whom you had been but very little connected with before, and who had often declared, in the presence of many witnesses, that he would never be connected with you; the continuance of that very extraordinary connection the rest of the voyage; convinced me at once, I could not be on a footing of intimacy, without subjecting myself to inconveniences which a spirit like mine could never brook. These, Sir, among many other reasons, have occasioned my acting with reserve towards you. Indeed, in the whole course of so long a voyage, I could observe a mind too actuated by ambition: such a tendency in Colonel Smith, to govern and command those who ought to govern and command him, that I could not be unreserved, without giving up that authority which I am determined ever to support; and although I do, and always have allowed you many virtues, so long as you continue to give so much general offence by that kind of behaviour, so long will

you be exposed to mortifications and disappointments."

Sir Robert Barker had made an application to Lord Clive to have a share, as Colonel commanding the brigade at Bahar, in the civil government of the country; and to form one of the Committee at Patna. The character of this officer was very different from that of Colonel Smith, and the reply from Lord Clive, which by a curious coincidence was written on the following day, was in very different terms.

"I must confess," he observes*, "the receipt of your letter of the 2d February, has given me infinite concern, because I feel for you as I should for myself, and there is no officer in this part of the world for whom I entertain so strong and true regard, or whom I am so very desirous of serving. I am sure, if it depended upon me, you should, upon Carnac's departure, succeed to his rank and station; so well acquainted am I with your merits as a soldier, your moderation and temper as a man. Your being hurt, therefore, at not having an appointment which is not in my power to obtain for you, cannot but hurt me. I am convinced that, great as my interest is, were I to propose your being joined with

* Letter to Sir R. Barker, under date 16th February, 1766.

Mr. Middleton in directing the collection of the revenues of the Bahar province, I could not carry that point. Consider, Barker, how very separate and distinct the services are; consider how very jealous the Directors are of military men, and how very attentive they will be to every action of mine, whom they look upon in a military more than in a civil light. Recollect that they would not even allow Coote to have a seat at the Board to give his advice, except upon military matters only. I say further, that were I to take such an unprecedented step, I doubt whether it would not add such weight of argument to those counsellors and malecontents, who are gone home with a full design to exclaim against arbitrary and military power, that the Company might be induced to disapprove of every thing I have done for them, from an apprehension that I meant to accomplish every measure, by the subversion of civil liberty. Persuaded I am, that the joining with Middleton a man of your steadiness, moderation, and discretion, would be of singular advantage to the Company: notwithstanding which, I dare not attempt to do it.

"But, let us suppose for a moment that I could gratify you in this request, what would be the consequence? Would not every officer commanding a brigade insist upon the like

privilege? What use do you imagine the *man* of Allahabad would make of such a concession? Indeed, Barker, if such an appointment were to take place, the letters from this settlement would occasion such an alarm in Leadenhall Street, that I verily believe I should be turned off my government, and all the field officers ordered home in the first ship. Point out to me, my friend, any method of extending your influence, without prejudice to the service we both wish to promote, and no man shall be readier than I to give the strongest proof of friendship and regard for you. Middleton shall have orders to consult with you upon all occasions where military duties are in agitation; so shall Setabroy and Durge Narain, and be ordered often to wait upon you."

Lord Clive, in this letter, after making some observations on the discontents of the officers, and giving an explanation of the origin of double batta, makes some excellent remarks upon those principles that should regulate the distribution of rewards to military bodies; which should, in his opinion, be such as to make men look to service and advanced rank as the means of attaining these objects of ambition. He concludes this letter with some strong observations on the advantages enjoyed by the Company's army, and the determined resolution of the Committee not to yield to unreasonable demands. "I am very

glad," he observes, "the officers have been so prudent as to lay aside their intentions of presenting a memorial; and the Company and myself are much obliged to Sir R. Barker for his soldier-like conduct and behaviour upon the occasion; although, I can assure you, there has been no memorial presented from the other brigades on the like subject. It is true, the Governor and Committee have received a remonstrance from the officers of Colonel Smith's brigade, setting forth the dearness of provisions and all other necessaries, at that great distance; and we have, in consequence of its being only a temporary expense to the Company, agreed to let things remain on their present footing, until the brigade be withdrawn from Sujah Dowlah's dominions; but the officers are at the same time informed, in the most positive terms, that this indulgence will cease the instant the troops cross the Carumnapa.

"I need not repeat how positive and absolute the Company's orders from Europe are, about reducing the military expenses to the proportion of the establishments on the coast of Coromandel, nay, even to less, because they imagine the price of provisions is lower; and I believe you are not unacquainted that the officers, for the first year they served in Bengal, were all satisfied with single batta: the double batta was merely an

indulgence obtained by me, and came immediately out of the Nabob's own pocket. It has been continued ever since, by the authority of the King's officers; and the Governor and Council have been obliged to acquiesce, in opposition to frequent orders from the Court of Directors. In short, our military gentlemen (countenanced and supported by the King's officers, who overawed the Governor and Council in such a manner, that, had quadruple batta been demanded, I doubt whether it would have been refused,) have continued to receive the indulgence almost as a matter of right. But now that the Company have appointed so many field officers, who are immediately in their own service, the salutary effects are visible; and I hope not only to see the strictest discipline and subordination enforced, but likewise economy established; for unless luxury and extravagance be abolished, discipline must fail, and the officers and soldiers be rendered incapable of doing their duty to their country and the Company. My grand object, you know, is, that none under the rank of field officers should have money to throw away. When they arrive at that rank, their hands are filled with such large advantages, that they may be certain of acquiring an independency in a few years. This consideration might, one would imagine, induce the officers to rest satisfied with their present ap-

pointments, since they have a greater advantage in prospect than they ever enjoyed before. My dear Colonel, let them look at all other services. Is there such another service in the world as this is, upon the footing on which it now stands? In the West Indies, in America, where all European articles and provisions likewise are full as dear as in Bengal, the officers and soldiers have scarce any extraordinary allowances at all. Let them reflect for a moment on the miserable condition of the half-pay officers in England, many of whom have undergone dangers and fatigues much superior to any in India. How many of them would be glad to serve the Company on their own terms? Add to this, that the revenues of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa belong to the Company themselves, and not to the Nabob; that what is now paid comes immediately out of their own pockets; and although the officers may plead prescription for indulgences from the Nabob, they can plead no such prescription from the Company. I may indeed assure you, the Committee are resolutely determined upon carrying the Company's orders into execution, and enforcing the new regulations. The only indulgence they could reconcile to their duty to the Company, was the extra allowance of 40 rupees per diem to each commanding officer of the brigades when in garrison, in order that his table might be a help to the other

officers, till a moderate way of living had taken place."

Lord Clive, it has been before mentioned, had received a legacy of five lacs of rupees bequeathed to him by the Nabob Meer Jaffier, which he had lodged in the Company's treasury, in order that it might be converted into a fund for the relief of disabled or decayed European officers and soldiers, and of destitute widows of officers of the Company's army. Noticing, in a letter to Sir R. Fletcher*, an absurd combination which the officers of his brigade had entered into, against Captain Ducarell and his brothers, he alludes to this munificent act. "On my arrival at Monghyr," (he observes) "I shall consider of some effectual means to put a stop to such unjust resentment." "I have," (he adds) "at present, a scheme on foot for the benefit of officers in the Bengal establishment; but I shall not hesitate to exclude any whom I may think undeserving, in any respect soever."

On the 28th of April, 1766, Lord Clive intimated to Sir R. Fletcher, his decided resolution to treat with the utmost severity, all who proceeded to the extreme of resigning the service; and, on the 29th of April, 1766, he makes the following observations in a letter to Sir R. Barker: —

Dated 3d February, 1766.

"During your absence upon the Bettoa expedition, the captains, lieutenants, and ensigns of your brigade have preferred a very extraordinary remonstrance to the Governor and Council, upon the subject of batta. This proceeding was, I think, somewhat contemptuous towards you; and, as the remonstrance was not transmitted through the channel of the commanding officer, I have given it as my opinion, that the Board should pay no other attention to it than that of sending it to you for your information. By the behaviour of our present corps of officers, one would actually conclude that every true idea of military discipline was effaced. I have just received authentic intelligence, that no less than one hundred and thirty officers of the third brigade have deposited their commissions, and entered into an association not to serve, unless the double batta be restored. To this, it seems, is added an agreement to subscribe for the maintenance of the principals (who they imagine will be the only sufferers), till their arrival in Europe, and to purchase for them commissions of equal rank in his Majesty's service. Can any man in his senses imagine that the Secretary at War, being made acquainted with the names and conduct of these officers, will ever give his consent to their admission into the King's regiments? With regard to these who

have already served in Europe, and are now upon the half-pay list, they would do well to recollect that they will not be entitled to their half-pay, on their return to England, without producing a certificate of their good behaviour in the service of the Company; for such is his Majesty's declared resolution; and if they cannot obtain half-pay, how can they expect to be admitted upon full pay? The enclosed copy of a letter we have just despatched to the gentlemen of Council at Fort William, will inform you of the measure that must take place, if this unmilitary association be not dissolved. And I will add, for my own part, that any officer who resigns his commission, from no other cause of disgust than the Company's orders for the reduction of batta, shall be absolutely dismissed the service, and never restored. For their own sakes, I hope they will speedily resolve upon a change of conduct, and I doubt not you will use your utmost influence to bring them to a right sense of their duty. If my sentiments have any weight, you are at liberty to make this as public as you please, as also the copy of the letter to the Council."

Lord Clive appears, throughout the whole of the violent proceedings of the officers, to have been convinced that the civil servants of the Company had instigated and aided the military

in their mutinous acts; and in answer to a letter from Mr. Verelst*, he observes,—"With regard to the assistance you say we may have from the civilians on an emergency, I can never consent to receive it, as I am certain they were the original cause of this mutinous association." When he learnt that the combination of officers had taken a formidable shape, he thus expresses himself, in a letter† to the same gentleman:—"I am determined to leave this place (Moorshedabad) on Tuesday next, and proceed with all expedition to Monghyr. Our business at this city, material as it is, must for a little while give way to the more pressing occasion which requires our presence at the army. If I find a fair opportunity, my endeavours to get some of the mutinous ringleaders shot will not be wanting. At all events, most of them shall be dismissed the service."

Lord Clive, at this period, felt the greatest annoyance from the want of cordial support from Mr. Sumner, the senior member of the Committee; and, irritated as he was by the continued opposition of several of the members of Council, the discontent of the civil, and the violence of the military, we are not surprised at the first paragraph of a private letter, written at this

* Letter to Mr. Verelst, dated 3d May, 1766.

† Letter to Mr. Verelst, 4th May, 1766.

period to Mr. Palk, Governor of Madras, under date the 6th of May, 1766. "Do you think," he asks, "History can furnish an instance of a man, with 40,000*l.* per annum, a wife and family, a father and mother, brother and sisters, cousins and relations in abundance, abandoning his native country, and all the blessings of life, to take charge of a government so corrupt, so headstrong, so lost to all principle and sense of honour, as this is?"

When a communication from Sir Robert Barker led him to believe that the officers would proceed to the last extreme, he wrote*, as we have already seen, in terms that strongly expressed his sense of their conduct, and the resolution to which he had come in respect to his own.

The heavy rains made Lord Clive's progress to Monghyr slow, but he directed every act of the officers commanding brigades, and to each of them he wrote private letters daily. He gave to Sir R. Fletcher and Sir R. Barker powers to promise forgiveness to subalterns, but not the captains, whom it was his fixed resolution to bring to condign punishment, on the just ground that their better experience rendered them less excusable than the young men to whom they gave so evil an example. To Colonel Smith a greater latitude was given. He was authorised,

* Letter to Sir R. Barker, p. 19.

as has been stated, in the event of the Mahrattas invading the country, but in no other case whatever, to make terms with his insubordinate officers, if they tendered their commissions.

On reaching Monghyr, he wrote to Colonel Smith * what had occurred, explaining the riotous conduct of the officers on his sending off some of the ringleaders to Calcutta, and the apprehended mutiny of the soldiers, which occurred from their expecting that their commanders were to head them. With respect to the native troops, he observes, "The black Sepoy officers, as well as men, have given great proofs of fidelity and steadiness upon this occasion; and, so long as they remain so, nothing is to be apprehended from the European soldiery, even if they should be mutinously inclined." In the conclusion of this letter, he desired Colonel Smith to inform his brigade, of his having recently vested 70,000*l.*, the legacy left him by Meer Jaffier, for the purpose of its interest being applied for the relief of disabled, worn-out officers and men of the Indian army.

In a letter dated the 4th of May, in which Lord Clive announced his positive intention to Sir R. Fletcher of proceeding to Monghyr as speedily as possible, he informs that officer that

* Letter to Colonel Smith, dated 15th May, 1766.

he is determined "those who have been most active shall be dismissed the service." Immediately on his arrival at Monghyr, he assembled the troops, and harangued them with the best effect, as far as the men were concerned. "I have this morning," he observes in a letter to Colonel Smith*, "had all the troops under arms, and made them a speech on the occasion. The sepoys are very firmly attached to their duty; and I am now confident that the Europeans likewise will give us no cause of complaint or apprehension. In short, every thing here is as quiet and as well regulated as could be wished."

From a letter to Mr. Verelst, Lord Clive appears to have learnt, in two days after his arrival at Monghyr, of the encouragement given to the officers by Sir R. Fletcher; a circumstance at the discovery of which he expresses great astonishment. From considerations of prudence, to which we have before alluded, he was, however, withheld from acting in an affair of so delicate a nature, without complete information. But his chief anxiety at this moment was the situation of Colonel Smith, who occupied an advanced position on the frontier, and had to apprehend an attack from the Mahrattas, at the very moment his officers were threatening to leave him.

* Dated 16th May, 1766.

Though Lord Clive expressed great indignation at the conduct of these officers, he appears to have contemplated forgiveness to those who had been led by the influence of bad example, or by fears, weakness, and inexperience, into a guilty association. In answer to a letter from Colonel Smith*, he observes, "The very infamous behaviour of so many officers will be an everlasting reproach upon the English nation, and cast a stain upon the Company's service, which all the water of the Ganges can never wash away. The Court of Directors will have before them a very convincing proof of the fatal effects of donation money, and extravagant allowances, and will be reduced to the necessity of taking some very extraordinary measures, to prevent such dangerous steps being taken by the officers in future." * * * * *

"When the officers were turned out of Monghyr, and obliged to embark, many of them went away with tears in their eyes, and saw their crime in the proper light. Some were first frightened into the measure, and then threatened with death if they retracted; others were inveigled, and there is not the least doubt but we shall soon have it in our option to choose from among the whole the most moderate and deserving of those

* Dated 18th May, 1766.

who have resigned the service. It will shock you much to hear that there is great reason to imagine that a very principal person at Monghyr has been the chief instigator of this mutinous behaviour; and you will be still more surprised to learn that the civilians have been very active in promoting the association. All the officers at Monghyr affirm there has been a subscription of 160,000 rupees made for that purpose. This last circumstance I can scarce credit."

Alluding, in a subsequent letter to Colonel Smith *, to the conduct of the officers of his brigade, Lord Clive observes, "The behaviour of those officers who were serving under you in the lines, and who resigned their commissions almost in the face of an enemy, is so very infamous, that no consideration on earth shall induce me to restore one of them to the service." "I wish," he goes on to observe, "with all my heart, your letter to the officers at Allahabad may persuade some of them to return to their duty; though, from the behaviour of the officers of the other brigades, I much doubt it. If any thing can have effect, it will be the fate of the other officers, all of whom I have sent down to Calcutta. Captain Stainforth and Ensign Hoggan having expressed a proper sense of

* Dated 22d May, 1766.

their late misbehaviour, I have permitted them both to return to their duty; and I have no doubt, from the surprise shown, and distress felt, at my accepting all their commissions, as many of them will offer to return to the service as we shall choose to accept of."

At the same time that these communications were made to Colonel Smith, a number of the best officers of the army, who were unassociated with the others, and had been called from different quarters, were sent to Allahabad to render his field brigade efficient for service; and those measures, added to the decided conduct of the Colonel, made Clive deem his own presence at Allahabad unnecessary; and he therefore determined to proceed no further than Chuprah. He had received information that the officers in garrison at Allahabad had left that place, after writing an impertinent letter to Colonel Smith. Orders were immediately given to send detachments of sepoys to make them prisoners, when they were directed to be sent to Calcutta; and Mr. Sumner and the Committee were requested* to keep them confined till vessels were ready to sail for England, when he desired that they should be sent home. Orders were given, upon this occasion, that the private letters by the post

* Letters to Mr. Sumner and Mr. Sykes, dated 23d and 24th May.

from Allahabad should be stopped, and sent in a separate bag to the post-master at Calcutta.

It would appear from the contents of several of his private letters of the same date, that Clive did not apprehend the slightest danger to the public interests from the defection of the officers at Allahabad. Major Smith, who commanded that fortress, had exhibited much spirit and firmness. His influence with the native troops gave him great strength; and none of the officers in command of the sepoy corps had joined the combination. Their situation was, at this period, one of consequence and emolument; their influence with their men great; and to this circumstance is, in a great degree, to be ascribed the unshaken fidelity of the sepoys, on a confidence in whom, it may be pronounced, the measures taken by Lord Clive, as well as those of the officers commanding brigades, were chiefly grounded.

Anxiety of mind, fatigue of body, and the extreme heat of the weather, affected Lord Clive's health; and, for one or two days, some letters were written to various quarters, by his secretary, Mr. Henry Strachey. And it is here to be remarked, as illustrative of the character of this extraordinary man, that from the day he received intimation of the discontent of the officers of the army, there are entered in his letter-books never

less than three, and sometimes five, six, and seven letters, written daily by himself on the subject; and the same books fully show that, during this period of great mental and bodily exertion, he gave personally the most minute attention to every other branch of public affairs. At the same time, he does not appear to have neglected any private correspondents, either in India or England.

On the 29th of May, Mr. Strachey informed Mr. Verelst, by Lord Clive's desire, that a considerable number of officers had returned to their duty, and desired to have their commissions restored; but that, while Lord Clive was disposed to act with much lenity and indulgence, it was far from his intention to accept the services of all those by whom they had been proffered. Some of these his Lordship (Mr. Strachey writes) is resolved to bring to justice.

"The only observation," he writes *, "Lord Clive directs me to make upon Mrs. W.'s intelligence about the rage of the civilians, and more than madness of the military, is, that they have mutually encouraged each other to such a degree of licentiousness, in defiance of civil and martial law, that he hardly expects to see a change of sentiments till the severity of example shall

* Letter to H. Verelst, Esq., 25th May, 1766.

have convinced the settlement of his resolution to save it from destruction."

Lord Clive wrote to Monsieur Law *, the French Governor of Chandernagore, and Monsieur Vernet, the Dutch Chief at Chinsurat, on the subject of the officers who had deserted their duty; and, while he informed them of the dishonourable course of action these officers had pursued, he requested they should not receive or give protection to men who had so dishonoured themselves. These respectable individuals, to whom, both personally, and as representatives of their country, Lord Clive always paid the greatest attention and respect, acted on this, and on all occasions during the time he was in India, in a manner suited to their own high characters.

"Patna, le 27 Mai, 1766.

"Monsieur,

"J'ai eu l'honneur de votre lettre du quinzième courant. Le sujet étant aussi intéressant pour vous, il sera, je crois, essentiel qu'une lettre me soit addressée de votre part et de votre conseil conjointement.

"Un nombre de nos officiers ont très-déshonorablement quitté le service, sous un prétexte le plus injuste; à savoir, qu'ils n'ont pas de quoi subsister; quoique notre militaire est le plus advantageux du monde. Ils sont actuellement en chemin pour Calcutta. Comme ils passeront par votre Colonie, j'ai jugé à propos de vous l'annoncer; et je me persuade que vous ne donnerez point d'accueil à des gens qui ont agi si indignement.

"Je suis, &c.,

"CLIVE."

A short letter from Lord Clive to Mr. Sykes, resident at Moorshedabad, of the 28th of May, in which he states the grounds on which alone he would allow those officers who were repentant to remain with their corps, and his steady resolution to admit of no compromise, shows that he viewed the combination to be, at this date, completely broken and subdued. "I have received," he observes, "your favours of the 19th and 20th. Captains Cummings and Mackenzie, having not yet absolutely declared their resolution to keep or resign their commissions, I desire you will send for these gentlemen, and oblige them to be explicit upon the occasion. If they intend to continue in the service (I do not mean as volunteers for a time of their own limiting), it is well; if not, you will be pleased to inform them you have my orders to dismiss them the service, and insist on their departing, and immediately, for Calcutta. Lieutenants Padman and Clirchue have, by their answers to Mr. Strachey's letters, sufficiently expressed their assent to the combination. You will, therefore, order them down without delay, acquainting them that they are no longer in the service. I shall consider of a proper officer to send you for the command of the troops: in the mean time, as every thing is quiet in the city, you will have no difficulty in preserving discipline.

"Matters are very well regulated in the 1st and 3rd Brigades. The officers of the 2d do not intend to resign till the 1st of June, by which time Colonel Smith will have received a good supply; and I doubt not, with the assist ance of the coast, that we shall, ere long, have the satisfaction of seeing our army in a better condition than ever."

The following letter from Lord Clive to Mr. Verelst at Calcutta * is too important to have one word omitted; for, while it shows the nature and extent of the combination formed against all authority, it exhibits the master mind by which the danger was foreseen and overcome, and it explains the mode in which it was deemed best to prevent the possibility of its recurrence: —

"Enclosed you will receive two letters, one from Mr. Martin, the other, although not signed, I know to be Higginson's handwriting; so that you see we are betrayed even by our own sub-secretary; and I make no doubt but the assistant-secretary is still deeper in the plot.

"You will observe, in the last general letter, the Directors order us to dismiss, not suspend; and I think near all the Company's servants concerned in exciting this mutiny might not

* Letter to Mr. Verelst, 28th May, 1766. Messrs. Abzal's gardens.

only be dismissed, but sent home in the first ship. Such a behaviour in England would be high treason to the state, and every man of them would be hanged.

"I hope the Council will not hesitate one moment about turning out of the office both Stephenson and Higginson, and dismissing them the service, if concerned in fomenting the late mutinous combination. Indeed, very few are to be trusted; and, in my opinion, the Council should immediately require the assistance of twelve or fourteen junior servants from Madras and Bombay; for, I am fully persuaded, this settlement can never be restored to order, or the honour of the nation or the Company retrieved, until there be a total change in the morals of individuals: and that can only be effected by turning out the most rich and factious, and transplanting others. I have some hopes the Directors will empower me to take such a step in their answer by the Admiral Stevens.

"How shocked must Sulivan and those Directors be, who opposed this appointment of field officers! Certain it is that, without their assistance, we must have given way to the mutiny amongst the officers; and it is equally certain, if we had, Bengal must have been lost, or a civil war carried on to restore to the Company their lost authority, rights, and possessions; for it is

beyond a doubt, that men capable of committing such actions as they have lately done would soon have gone such lengths as to have made it impossible ever to return to their native country.

"There was a committee to each brigade, sworn to secrecy; and I have it from undoubted authority, that the officers thought themselves so sure of carrying their point, that a motion was made and agreed to, that the Governor and Council should be directed to release them from their covenants. The next step would, I suppose, have been the turning me and the Committee out of the service. In short, I tremble with horror when I think how near the Company were to the brink of destruction.

"The plot hath been deeply laid, and of four months' standing. I can give a shrewd guess at the first promoters. One of them I have already mentioned to you, who will ere long, I hope, be brought to condign punishment.

"Remember again to act with the greatest spirit; and if the civilians entertain the officers, dismiss them the service; and if the latter behave with insolence, or are refractroy, make them all prisoners, and confine them in the new fort. If you have any thing to apprehend, write me word, and I will come down instantly, and bring with me the third brigade, whose officers and men can be depended upon.

"I wish the Board would allow Hare two months longer to settle his affairs: he is one of the best among the servants of Patna.

"I am, &c.

"CLIVE.

"P.S. A box of intercepted letters will be sent down to-morrow by water, under a guard of Sepoys. I would advise the Board to open every one of them."

Sir Robert Fletcher, of whose guilt, though suspected, no public proof had as yet been adduced, wrote to Lord Clive, expressing his willingness to pay the penalty bond into which three officers in whom he took an interest had entered, in order to remunerate those who might suffer in consequence of their being prominent as advocates of the claims of their brother officers. The following answer of Lord Clive is a valuable document, as it exhibits, in a clear and convincing manner, the erroneous principles and the baneful results of this part of the combination; of the total impossibility of its being recognised as either consistent with law or honour by any constituted authority. It shows, also, that disposition to forgive the young and inexperienced, which his Lordship throughout these proceedings entertained: —

"I have this morning received yours without date.* Your proposal to pay the 500*l.* penalty for the two M'Phersons and Ensign Patton is what I never can approve of. Were they the best officers in the world, I would not consent to receive them again into the service on such terms.

"The engagement entered into among themselves is not only mutinous and absurd, but illegal; and, therefore, the penalty cannot be recoverable by law. Besides, I consider the paying of it actually raising a subscription ourselves for the benefit of those who do not retract: nor is it at all unlikely that, were they to find the penalty money paid, a collusion would follow, for many of them to retract, in order to obtain a maintenance, nay, an independency, for the remainder. If only fifty of them should return on that plan (and I am sure there must be a much greater number who would be glad to return on any terms), a fund amounting to no less than 25,000*l.* would be established, which, at 4 per cent. interest, would produce 1,000*l.* per annum. In short, the affair will not bear a moment's reflection; and I must insist upon your dropping all thoughts of it. You will please to communicate my sentiments to Major Ironside, posi-

* Letter to Sir R. Fletcher, dated 30th May, 1766.

tively forbidding him to pay the penalty for his brother.

"If the young man repents of his association, and is desirous to resume the service, I consent to his being restored, the General and you having no objection; but I expect that the penalty money, that unjust debt of false honour, shall not be paid.

"Be assured that the report of my having written, or in any manner applied for the return of the gentlemen you hint at, is without foundation.

"Neither Lieutenant Britton, nor any of those who signalised themselves in the combination, shall have my consent to be restored, however strongly they may be recommended to my protection.

"Captain Hampton and Kinloch have both resigned. The former, together with Ensign Pellans, I have ordered from Midnapore to Calcutta."

From Lord Clive's private correspondence with the commandants of brigades, in the beginning of June, it appears, that the officers, disheartened and disunited, sought only to save themselves from that ruin and disgrace which they were now sensible they had brought upon themselves. No victory was ever more complete than that which he had gained; and it

must have been the more gratifying, as he owed his success almost exclusively to his personal wisdom, firmness, and prompt decision. He met every danger, as it arose, with an unshrinking mind. Satisfied that concessions would only generate further demands, he made none: but when he had vindicated authority, and restored order, he displayed a degree of temper and of clemency worthy of his character. He attended to the petitions of many to be restored to the service which they had too hastily resigned. From such indulgent consideration he excluded most of the senior officers, and all those persons whose character made it desirable to keep them out of the service, with all those who had been prominent as ringleaders; while officers who had not actually resigned, however intemperate their threats and conduct had been, were pardoned on expressing contrition for their past conduct.

After subduing this combination in the military employed in the provinces, Clive appears to have thought that the bad spirit which existed at Calcutta required strong measures.

"The spirit of civil as well as military mutiny," he observes*, "that has lately appeared in Calcutta deserves so much of our attention, as to mark the most turbulent, whether Com-

* Letter to H. Verelst, Esq., dated 6th June, 1766.

pany's servants, or free merchants, and resolutely send them to Europe; for Bengal never can be what it ought to be whilst licentiousness is suffered to trample upon authority."

When Captain Goddard, and some others, came forward to accuse Sir R. Fletcher of having encouraged the mutinous combination of the officers of his brigade, Lord Clive placed him under arrest. An appeal was made by Sir Robert to have his case judged by the Governor in Council; but this Lord Clive, though disposed to oblige him, declined. "Your repairing to Calcutta," his Lordship observed *, "in order to be tried by the President and Council, upon an accusation your exculpation from which depends merely upon military law, is totally unprecedented, and therefore improper for me to comply with. That you may not, however, imagine that I intend to take any other part upon this occasion than my public station requires, be assured that the court-martial to be held upon your late conduct will be assembled by an order from the Board, and the sentence confirmed or disapproved by them."

The junior field officers, who had, by their recent conduct, entitled themselves to the fullest approbation of Lord Clive, presumed upon their

* Letter to Sir R. Fletcher, dated 3d July, 1766.

services so far as to send a memorial, claiming the right of sharing in the salt revenue; an allowance which, in the military line, had been limited to their seniors.

This memorial Lord Clive prevented being delivered; pointing out, at the same time, to the memorialists the injury they would do themselves, and the impropriety of Government complying with so unreasonable a request. They attended to his advice, and the memorial was withdrawn; on which he addressed to them the following flattering letter: —

"Colonel Smith* has undoubtedly acquainted you that I declined presenting your memorial to the Board previous to my receipt of your application for withdrawing it; and I conclude that the arguments I urged against the memorial, in my letter to him, have convinced you of my wish to preserve the enjoyment of the present emoluments to the field officers upon this establishment. The general good of the whole, added to the consideration that every supernumerary Major will succeed, upon vacancies, to a share in the salt trade, will, I hope, prevail upon you to rest satisfied with the present distribution.

"I cannot omit this opportunity of mention-

* Vide Letter to the Junior Field Officers, 6th October, 1766.

ing how sensible I am of the service done by you, and the other field officers, on the late mutinous combination; as without such assistance the resolution of the President and of the Council must have proved ineffectual. And, perhaps, you will not be displeased upon my assuring you, that, in my letters to the Court of Directors, I have represented your conduct, upon that particular occasion, in the very favourable light it so justly deserved."

For Sir Robert Barker Lord Clive had the sincerest regard *; but he always regretted the too easy character of that excellent officer. It appears by a letter from Sir Robert Barker, that some observations which had been made by the Governor upon Lieutenant Vertue's court-martial, of which he was President, and upon the subject of bazars, had reached him; and that he addressed Lord Clive in a tone of complaint. The following observations, made by the latter in reply, are interesting, both as they exhibit that frankness with which he ever explained himself to those whom he regarded, and the opinion he entertained of those indirect sources of emolument which military officers in India,

* Before Lord Clive left India, he wrote to Sir R. Barker, earnestly advising him to remain till Colonel Smith returned, and assuring him of his support to succeed that officer in the command of the troops in Bengal.

who held commands, so long continued to derive from the sale of liquor and bazars: —

"I have received your letter* of the 3d of August, and rejoice to find that you have recovered your former state of health. Orders are sent to the commanding officers to appoint a greater number of members than thirteen, which, I hope, will prevent these delays in future.

"I am sorry you should think yourself obliged to defend your own conduct, as well as that of the members of the general court-martial appointed to sit upon the trial of Lieutenant Vertue. When I suggested to you my opinion at Bankepore, I addressed myself to you alone, without mentioning the other members. The liberty I then took very nearly regarded your honour and reputation, as well as the welfare of the East India Company, in which is included the welfare of the nation.

"I must call to your remembrance some particular expressions I made use of that morning at breakfast, as others were present, and can prove the truth of what I assert. I told you, that, where conscience was in the case, exclusive of the sacredness of an oath, the world should not bias me to swerve from my opinion; but where that was not so, and I was convinced in

* Letter to Sir R. Barker, dated 12th August, 1766.

my own mind, a man was guilty, neither apprehensions of law, or any deficiency in forms, should influence me to act in favour of those who were not deserving of it. I told you, at the same time, all the general officers in Great Britain would canvass this general court-martial, and that their attention would be more particularly fixed upon you, the President. These were my words, or words to that purpose; this also is my opinion, which I am not ashamed to declare to the whole world. If, therefore, any busy, intermeddling person has represented to you my expressions in another light, he has represented a falsity.

"With regard to the bazar duties, you may be assured from me, that, when I mentioned the circumstance of Sir Robert Fletcher's conduct, I was an utter stranger to any duties whatever being collected by the commanding officers on the necessaries of life. I never received such myself, or knowingly suffered others under me to receive them, either upon the coast or at Bengal; and had Colonel Smith, when he prided himself upon never having received bazar duties, informed me that he had allowed Colonel Peach to receive them, it would have been more consistent with that sincerity which he has always professed.

"No one has shown himself a greater friend to the field officers than myself; yet they seem

already to forget the great advantages they enjoy. However, I must remark, that, to an officer whose pay and emoluments amount to 12,000*l.* per annum, the bazar duties can scarce be an object.

"I am surprised to find myself accused of erecting Colonel Gunge at Patna. To speak plainly, Barker, I never established a Gunge in my life, and never will; because I never approved of receiving duties on the necessaries of life; although I do not think those officers much in fault who have done the same from prescription only. Colonel Gunge was created by Colonel Caillaud, and revived by Colonel Cook. The Committee have forbid this custom in future.

"To conclude, the style and diction of this last letter is so contrary to Sir Robert Barker's natural disposition, that I am persuaded some evil-minded persons, who have their own interests more than your reputation at heart, have been the occasion, through misrepresentation. However, since my friendship for you is mistrusted, and the regard and attention which I have shown for your welfare, from the day of your embarkation to this hour, forgotten, I can only lament your misfortune and mine, that there should be men in the world who can make these impressions. For my own part, I am almost weary of

the burden. I have found the pride, ambition, resentment, and self-interestedness of individuals so incompatible with the public good, that I should have given up the contest long ago, if I had not set the greatest value upon my own reputation, which is all I must expect to preserve upon my return to England, after so odious and disagreeable an undertaking."

In a second letter* upon the same subject, Lord Clive observes, —

"With regard to bazars, the vindication of yourself amounted so near to an accusation of me, that I could not avoid replying as I did. You must, however, have been by my letter convinced of your mistake in supposing that I either established, or enjoyed any advantages from, the Gunge at Patna; and I hope you are no less convinced that my arguments against the practice of levying duties upon the necessaries of life were urged with as much tenderness as the nature of the subject would admit. I wished to prevent your doing in future what I was of opinion would affect your reputation, but I did not suppose that what had passed was from the motive of extortion or avarice.

"Be assured, Barker, upon the whole, that all I said and wrote was dictated by a sincere re-

* Letter to Sir R. Barker, dated 8th October, 1766.

gard to your honour, and by a desire to see you act with propriety and dignity in matters which I judged were of no small importance to your own character."

The officers concerned in the combination, who were brought to a court-martial, were all cashiered except Captain Parker, and he was dismissed by an order of Government. That more severe sentences were not awarded to several who were guilty of mutiny, appears to have been occasioned by some doubts on the part of the Court by which they were tried as to an expression in the Mutiny Act, which subjected those to martial law who have contracted to serve the Company; and it was conceived that the acceptance of a commission formed no contract. This interpretation was erroneous; and had it been otherwise, it would have been as illegal to have deprived an officer of his commission as of his life. But we cannot be surprised that, where a doubt was raised, a body of officers unskilled in law, though they might have deemed it essential to maintain subordination, were disposed to as much lenity as was compatible with that object.

Lieutenant Stainforth, and another officer, were accused, among other crimes, of a declared intention of assassinating the Governor. Such assertions were certainly made, but no overt

act warranted the belief of the intention; and it was never credited by Lord Clive, who alluded to it on his addressing the officers and men at Monghyr. He was speaking, he said, he was assured, to Englishmen, not assassins. To Lieutenant Stainforth, when ordered to England with the other officers who were dismissed, his secretary addressed, by his desire, a letter pointing out in kind but decided terms the impossibility of compliance with his request to be restored to the service; and that, even if he were restored, the officers, after what had passed, would refuse to do duty with him. Towards this officer, and others, who had shown in their language and acts the extreme of personal hostility to him, Clive, neither at the moment nor afterwards, cherished any resentment. His efforts to establish discipline, and repress an insubordinate and mutinous spirit, were strong and uncompromising; but, that object gained, he appears to have shown as much lenity and consideration for individuals as was compatible with the maintenance of that authority which had been so violently assailed.

The circumstances under which Lord Clive had to act, and the difficulties he had to overcome, are well stated by his successor, Mr. Verelst, in a work which he subsequently published in defence of his own conduct.

"The impolitic arrangement of affairs* was among the least evils of the Company's situation, antecedent to Lord Clive's arrival. The dissolution of government in Calcutta kept pace with that of the country. A general contempt of superiors, a habit of equality among all orders of men, had obliterated every idea of subjection. To reclaim men from dissipation, to revive a general spirit of industry, to lead the minds of all from gaudy dreams of sudden-acquired wealth to a patient expectation of growing fortunes, were no less difficult in execution than necessary to the existence of the Company. Large sums of money, obtained by various means, had enabled many gentlemen to return to Europe. This cause, superadded to the massacre of Patna, occasioned a very quick succession in the service, which encouraged a froward spirit of independency, and produced a total contempt of public orders, whenever obedience was found incompatible with private interest. To check such impatient hopes, where youths aspired to the government of countries at an age scarcely adequate to the management of private affairs, four gentlemen, being called from Madras, were admitted into Council.

"The universal discontent among the civil

* Vide Verelst's "View of the English Government in Bengal." Lond. 1772. 4to, p. 56.

servants which had arisen from the late measures, restraining the power of individuals, was hereby greatly increased; and, united with the mutinous spirit of the military officers, broke forth, the following year, into a flame, which threatened destruction to the English empire in Bengal.

"This event, though among the transactions of a later period, may, not improperly, be here explained. The military in Bengal had for several years enjoyed an indulgence beyond those in the other settlements of the Company, which first arose from the bounty of the Subahdar, when they were employed in his service. By the advice of an officer who had long commanded the Company's troops upon the coast of Coromandel, with great reputation to himself and honour to the nation, representing this extraordinary allowance as destructive of discipline, the Directors, in their public letters, had frequently ordered the double batta to be withdrawn.* Such directions, in a settlement where all idea of subordination was lost, and where the conduct of the superior servants respecting their own interests could ill be reconciled with a rigid exaction of obedience to the Company's commands in others, produced little effect. One feeble effort was made; but a remonstrance from

* A repetition of this command was among the particular instructions to Lord Clive in 1764.

the military induced a ready submission on the part of the Governor and Council. The Select Committee, very justly conceiving, that a regard to private interest would not justify a disobedience to the positive injunction of their superiors*, resolved to carry the measure into immediate execution."

A historian little disposed to take a favourable view of Lord Clive's motives or actions, commenting upon his conduct on this trying occasion, observes†; "It was one of these scenes, however, in which he was admirably calculated to act with success. Resolute and daring, fear never turned him aside from his purpose, or deprived him of the most collected exertions of his mind in the greatest emergencies. To submit to the violent demands of a body of armed men, was to resign the government."

This praise, reserved as it is, has value coming from such a quarter; but it is fair to state, that the historian formed his judgment on this and other acts of Lord Clive solely from public records. He has not, like the writer of these pages, had access to that private correspondence,

* Under the establishment of this double batta, a Captain's commission produced little short of 1000*l.* per annum: when reduced, it was worth from 650*l.* to 700*l.*, as appeared upon the action of Captain Parker against Lord Clive.

† Mill's "History of British India," vol. iii. p. 376.

by which he has been enabled to examine every letter or note which Clive received or wrote daily to persons of all ranks and classes; nor could he trace his feelings, as the writer has done, at every hour of this great crisis, during which, it appears from the most authentic documents, that his mind was not only cool and unshaken, but that, though often ruffled with honest indignation at proofs of cowardice, treachery, and guilt, he was never betrayed into one act unworthy of his private or his public character. He not only warned all of the dangers into which they were rushing headlong, but personally entreated them to remain in the path of duty; or, when they had left it, to return. In the prosecution of the most guilty he never mingled his own name; on the contrary, we find him extending to all such as had attacked him personally, as much clemency and consideration as was compatible with the public interests; and this kindness not only reached those who deceived him most grossly, but was extended to an unfortunate individual who, in a moment of rage, had threatened to become his assassin. On the other hand, when warmth of temper and impatience led him, as it sometimes did, to express himself with unkindness, if not harshness, to those whose efforts and zeal did not keep pace with his own, we find him treating

their remonstrances in a manner which, from its frankness and tone of friendship, was alike calculated to establish his own superiority, and to gain their respect, if not their attachment.

There is no event of his life in which Lord Clive showed more knowledge of human nature, and a more intimate acquaintance with all the elements which compose military bodies, than on this occasion. While he visited with severity of punishment bold offenders, he gave the most delicate attention to the high feelings of honour, which had kept others free from guilty associations. When, under an impression that there was a defect in the articles of war, he would restore none of those who had joined the combination, until they signed a contract to serve a certain period, he made no such call upon those who had been true to their duty. The contract might be necessary, he said; but men who had undergone such a trial ought not to be insulted with a suspicion that any further tie was required to bind their allegiance. They repaid this confidence by voluntarily insisting upon signing the contract, into which officers with whom they continued to serve had been compelled to enter.

Lord Clive appears, from both his public and private letters, to have estimated the complete victory he had obtained on this occasion beyond

any he ever gained in the field: and, in fact, it was with reason that he did so. Considering that upwards of two hundred officers had not only combined, but had pledged themselves by every tie that could bind men, to oppose authority, Clive had solid ground for exultation in the success of measures, planned and executed by himself, the result of which was to restore subordination, to vindicate an insulted Government, and to save the country from ruin. And this achievement was the more gratifying, from being attended with comparatively few consequences that were ultimately injurious to any great body of individuals. It must, moreover, have been satisfactory to Lord Clive, to know that this combination had not its source in any of those evil designs by which such mutinous proceedings are often marked. It originated in the too long continuance of a temporary grant, of an extra allowance, to which young officers (and almost all concerned were such) soon adapted their expenditure; and when luxuries, recommended by the climate and character of the service, became necessaries, they were not likely to recognise the justice of the distinction, which had been made by the Directors, between the boon of a Nabob (which the double batta first was), and a direct payment from the treasury of Government, which it became after the

Company had obtained the grant of the Dewannee.

The opposition which the officers offered to the reduction of their allowances, was in some measure countenanced by the local Government, which had evaded the execution of the orders issued by the Directors for the abolition of double batta. Nor is it very surprising, that the officers should have heedlessly rushed on the extreme measure of resigning their commissions, when we advert to the encouragement which their combination had received from an officer of the rank and reputation of Sir Robert Fletcher; and to the sympathy and support which had been expressed and afforded by the civilians, among whom were some who held confidential situations under the Government, and others who were believed to have great influence in England: these persons were, as well as the military, discontented with the revisions and reductions which Lord Clive had adopted. Under these circumstances, and under the impression that their services could not be dispensed with, at a time when the country was not only unsettled, but threatened with invasion by a large Mahratta army, the officers felt confident that the Governor must have yielded to their demands. But in thus judging, they appear to have little understood the character of him with whom they

had to contend; and when they were met, not only with an unyielding spirit, but treated at once as criminals, and every measure adopted for their punishment, they fell without a struggle. They had prepared no means to go beyond their first act; and this, though it was by some brought forward as a proof of want of forethought and weakness, was, in fact, a proof of their innocence of any deliberate intention to injure the interests of their country: though, but for the overruling genius of Clive, the most fatal injury would assuredly have been the consequence of the success of their guilty combination; for, had they succeeded, the civil Government would have lost all respect, and the usurpation of the public authority, by a combination of officers, would have given an example to their men which, if followed, would have been alike destructive of all discipline, and have terminated in the subversion of the English government in Bengal.

## CHAP. XVI.

In the preceding two chapters, an account has been given of Lord Clive's successful efforts in the arduous task of reforming the abuses, and restoring order and discipline to the civil and military services of Bengal: it remains to notice other public proceedings of importance during his last residence in India.

No question connected with this period of his service was, at the moment and subsequently, the subject of more comment and discussion, both on the part of the Government at home and of individuals, than the monopoly of the salt trade; the profits of which he divided among the Governor, the Counsellors, and the senior civil and military officers; deeming this indulgence, as he repeatedly states in his official and private letters, indispensable to the integrity and efficiency of the public service. Men in high station, he argued, unless some ample and open allowance was given them, could never be expected to be reconciled to a strict observance of the covenants that prohibited presents, nor to the loss of that internal trade which had been

denounced as so ruinous and oppressive. The shares in the profits from salt were, by his plan, divided according to the rank and duties of the parties. The amount was known, and, though liberal, it was limited, and, certainly, would not appear, from the statements made of it, to be more than a fair remuneration to men employed as those were to whom it was allotted.

Whether this mode of remunerating service was the best at the period when it was adopted, and whether the monopoly of the salt produced in the lower parts of Bengal, which the East India Company found existing, and have ever since, under one shape or another, continued, was advantageous or hurtful, on sound financial principles, are questions which merit notice, both as connected with the biography of Clive, and with the source of our Indian revenues.

The habits of thinking, and constitution, of the Court of Directors, rendered them very adverse to granting adequate salaries to those employed in high stations. These had all (including the military) the privilege of trading; and to the exercise of this privilege many of the abuses of the earlier times of the service have been justly attributed. Clive appears to have made reiterated representations upon this subject, impressing the necessity of adequate allowances, in some shape, to the superior officers, in order to animate their

zeal, and preserve their public integrity. The narrow allowance to military officers, and their being expected to gain by trade, he particularly condemned. Writing to Major Stibbert*, he observes, "I have received your letter of the 17th inst., and am not a little surprised that you should so soon request leave to return to Calcutta, considering how short a time you have done duty in your brigade. Your attention, I suspect, is too much taken up with commercial affairs; a study very foreign from an officer, even of an inferior rank, as it must frequently interfere with the services of a military station, but particularly reprehensible in those to whom a share in the profits upon salt is allotted. However, I admit that the death of your attorney may make your presence in Calcutta necessary. You have, therefore, my permission to leave the cantonments immediately, if the service will permit, and Colonel Smith has no objection."

The ground on which he felt the necessity of assuring to military officers of rank liberal allowances, in order that they might suitably maintain their station in life, and enjoy a reward for long service; and the necessity he saw for putting an end, on their part, to all indefinite and indi-

* Letter to Major Stibbert, Bankepore, dated 27th September, 1766.

rect perquisites, and of giving to their minds a tone that should elevate them above all sordid views, and make them what their stations required they should be, is well stated in a letter * to Sir Robert Barker: — "Colonel Smith is making a vigorous progress in reforming the abuses that fall under his notice. The monstrous charges and impositions of quarter-masters, surgeons, &c., &c., require, indeed, the strictest scrutiny; and he seems determined to go through it with great spirit and attention to the Company's interest. Nor shall I be disappointed in the assistance I expect from you in these matters, whilst I shall, at the same time, have the satisfaction of knowing that you can enforce wholesome regulations without creating disgust. The privilege of making bills, and the long track of frauds introduced under the customary disguise of perquisites, I wish to see entirely abolished. Every emolument shall be fixed, plain and open: the medium shall, if possible, be struck between extravagance and niggardly restrictions: but economy shall take place. The allowance to field officers will be so large as to prevent even their wishing for more; and, at the same time, so reasonable, that I think the Company must approve of them. A colonel's share of the salt produce will be from

* Dated 4th October, 1765.

5000*l.* to 6000*l.* per annum, or more*; lieutenant-colonel's and major's in proportion; and as a further encouragement, I intend that all the field officers shall be allowed sufficient to defray the expense of their table. When all mean advantages are disclaimed and held in contempt by gentlemen high in the service, reformation will, of course, be with greater ease introduced among inferiors. You will do me the justice to believe that I mean this as a general observation only, and not as a necessary hint, either to yourself or any of the field officers of your regiment, as I know you are all men of honour and principle."

The reasons of expediency that led Clive to recommend that high public officers, civil and military, should be remunerated by shares in the profits of the salt trade, are stated in numerous letters. He thought that an open, direct, pecuniary allowance would not willingly be sanctioned by the Company out of any of the revenues which flowed into their treasury, and still less from the profits of their trade; and that, besides, such large avowed allowances would invite an attack from the Crown on their patronage; and that the grasping character of the administration

* He afterwards saw reason to estimate a Colonel's share at 7000*l.*

in England would lead to a ruinous interference in the nomination of men to India who had no recommendation but their high birth and great interest.

It was the above considerations that compelled him to devise the means he deemed least objectionable of adequately rewarding service, in order to gain, by the tie of self-interest as well as honour, those instruments without whose aid he was sensible the great reform he had resolved to introduce could neither be complete nor permanent. In Clive's correspondence and measures, at this period, will be found the origin and introduction of that important principle of a fair and honourable payment for service, suited to its nature and the rank and responsibility of the individuals employed, which has been generally ascribed to the more enlightened policy of a subsequent administration. That his efforts failed, was owing to the conduct of others, and particularly the public authorities in England, who, in their attack upon the salt monopoly and its appropriation, and in the condemnation of his measures, threw, for a period, a disrepute upon all that he had done, which led to a revival of a great proportion of the abuses he had corrected, and a disregard of the principles he had established. As the salt monopoly and its appropriation has been a subject of constant attack upon

his character, and continues, so far as the monopoly is concerned, to be still one upon the Indian Government, the subject merits a cursory notice, which is all that the limits and objects of this Memoir will permit.*

We have already seen that, by the firman of the King of Delhi, the English Company possessed the right of trading free from duties. This privilege was granted to favour the kind of trade they then carried on, which was confined to exports and imports by sea: and the dustuck, or passport, of the English presidents or chiefs, was respected by the Subahdar's officers to that extent. Under this privilege the President favoured also the private trade of the Company's servants or officers, which, though not strictly according to the words of the firman, was never objected to.

As to the internal or carrying trade of the country, to engage in it never entered into the plans of the Company or its servants, which were confined to the valuable and profitable traffic between Europe and India; and, had they thought of it, it is clear that it could not have been profitably conducted by foreigners under a native government, which had the

Here, unfortunately, Sir John Molcolm's labours close. A few extracts, marked out by him, afterwards occur, where they are pointed out.

power of enforcing justice in the transactions between them and its own subjects.

But after the deposition of Suraj-u-Dowlah, and the elevation of Meer Jaffier, the influence of the English in Bengal became paramount; and, as they were all traders, some of them extended their views, and availed themselves of their political superiority to enter into the internal trade also; and, applying their partial freedom from duties on foreign trade to circumstances totally different, employed it to exempt themselves from duties even on their illegal internal commerce; an indulgence which, of course, had never been intended.

As long as Clive remained in Bengal, he checked these pretensions by his characteristic firmness and spirit; but no sooner had he left the country, than there was a general rush of the Company's servants, and of Europeans of all classes, towards the interior trade of the three provinces. In the foreign trade, the Company and its officers had, indeed, the advantage of trading free of duties, but the returns were tardy, and a some instances uncertain; whereas in the internal trade the return was rapid and certain; and, as they most unjustly claimed for this trade the same exemption from duties which they had enjoyed for the articles of their foreign export trade, it is clear that they had it

in their power to undersell the native merchant in his own market; that, to the extent of their capital, they had all the advantages of a monopoly; and that, as their trade increased, the revenues of the sovereign must decay. By this assumption they, in fact, made themselves participators in the benefit of the taxes imposed for the public service.

Of all the articles of inland trade, that of salt was by much the most important. Its manufacture and trade had always, to a certain extent, been a monopoly, and was generally farmed or granted for a price, as a boon, to some favourite of the prince. Being a necessary of life, the demand was great and steady; and the capital employed in the trade being limited, the return on it was very large. It seems, under the frugal management of the natives, to have amounted to 200 per cent. After the deposition of Meer Jaffier in favour of Cossim Ali, planned, as we have seen, by Mr. Holwell, and imprudently executed by Mr. Vansittart in 1760, not long after Lord Clive's departure, the abuses of the English private trade in this and a its other branches, no longer sufficiently checked by the Governor, increased daily. Fortunes were amassed with singular rapidity; and such was the certainty of gain, that native capital flowed plentifully into the hands of the English merchant,

who employed it himself, or permitted the trade of natives to be carried on covertly under his name. It could not be otherwise; for, while the native purchased the commodity at a high rate, paid an enormous duty, and was subject to all the expense and annoyance of frequent tolls, exactions, and stoppages, the English had become possessed of the principal salt works, paid no duty, and carried their wares at pleasure about the country for sale free from all demand or exaction whatever.

Cossim Ali, a prince of great sagacity, and no mean financier, remonstrated with Mr. Vansittart on the abuses exercised by the English, and still more under their name, all over the country, to the oppression of his subjecer and the ruin of the public revenues; for not only did the Gomashtahs, and others in the service of the English, refuse payment of customs, but they insulted, and sometimes even insolently punished, on their own authority, the officers of the native Government. Mr. Vansittart, quite aware of the justice of the complaints, and not unwilling to remedy them, as far as the little power left in his hands by the rapacity of his Council, and his own want of vigour, would allow, at length entered into a treaty with the Subah*,

* End of 1762.

by which, among other stipulations, it was agreed, that the English should be allowed to engage in the inland trade, but subject to duties; and, in particular, were to be allowed to purchase salt, subject to a low duty of 9 per cent. only, and might transport it about the country, free from all the transit duties paid by the Subah's own subjects.*

This arrangement, such as it was, afforded but a feeble redress to Meer Cossim: but the Council, themselves the principal traders, were indignant, even at this moderate deduction from their commercial gains, and disavowed the act of the Governor. The consequence was what we have seen: Meer Cossim, seeing his subjects deprived of their trade, and himself of his revenues, proclaimed a general exemption from customs and duties for two years, to his subjects and to all others.

The rage of the Council of Calcutta at this step, rendered necessary by their own conduct, led to a bloody war, the massacre of Patna, the deposition of Meer Cossim, and the restoration of Meer Jaffier. It was not without reason that the Court of Directors regarded "the inland trade as the foundation of all the bloodshed, massacres, and confusion which have happened of late years in Bengal."

* Vansittart's Narrative, vol. ii. p. 164—170.

By the treaty* with the restored prince, the English got a right of trading by their own dustuck, free of all taxes, duties, and impositions, excepting one of two and a half per cent. on salt. This was, in effect, giving them a monopoly of that profitable trade; and it appears that even this duty, trifling as it was, was never levied. The arrangement threw the whole inland trade of the country into the hands of the English and their agents, whose violence totally paralysed the native Government.

These proceedings, and their fatal consequences, were viewed by the Court of Directors with indignation and alarm. The new assumptions had not even the air of being for their benefit, but were exclusively for the advantage of their servants. They therefore, in order to repress the evil, on the 8th of February, 1764, sent out an order to put an end to the inland trade in salt, betle-nut, and tobacco, and all other articles produced and consumed in the country.

It was soon after this order was resolved upon that, the news of the massacre of Patna, the war with Meer Cossim, and other events, having reached England, and diffused the greatest consternation every where, and especially at the India House, Lord Clive was solicited once more to return to Bengal, to restore peace and

* 10th July, 1763.

stability to the empire of which he was the founder. In his letter to the Court of Directors *, accepting of the government, fully aware of one great source of misrule, he recommended an entire abolition of the inland trade in salt, betle-nut, and tobacco, as having, with other circumstances, concurred to hasten and bring on the late troubles.

But, soon after the date of this letter, the Court of Proprietors, among whom were numbers favourable to the claims of the servants, and who saw with alarm a stop likely to be put to a trade which, in the short space of four years, had already sent many large fortunes to England, had come to a resolution † to recommend "to the Court of Directors to re-consider the orders sent to Bengal relative to the trade of the Company's servants in salt, betle-nut, and tobacco; and that they do give such directions for regulating the same, agreeably to the interest of the Company and the Subah, as to them may appear most prudent; either by settling here at home the restrictions under which this trade ought to be carried on, or by referring it to the Governor and Council of Fort William to regulate this important point in such a manner as

* 24th April, 1764. † 18th May, 1764.

may prevent all future disputes betwixt the Subah and the Company."

The orders of the 8th of February had been dispatched previously to the arrival of the news of the new treaty with Meer Jaffier; - "the terms of which, however," the Directors justly observe, "appear to be so very injurious to the Nabob, and to the natives, that they cannot, in the very nature of them, tend to any thing but the producing general heart-burnings and dissatisfaction;" it is therefore directed, that the orders of the 8th of February remain in force, till a more equitable plan can be formed; the Governor and Council being directed to consult the Nabob as to the manner of carrying on the inland trade of salt, and other articles produced and consumed in the country, which may be most to his satisfaction and advantage, the interest of the Company, and likewise of the Company's servants, and to form and transmit home an equitable plan, to enable the Court to give directions. It is to be remembered, therefore, that in this view there was a threefold interest to be considered; that of the Nabob, of the Company, and of the Company's servants.

This letter was carried out to India in the ship which conveyed Lord Clive; though a copy,

* Letter, 1st June, 1764.

sent by another vessel, arrived some time before him.

When Lord Clive reached India, one of the first objects that engaged his attention was the manner in which the public servants were to be remunerated.

At that period, their direct salaries were very trifling; that of councillor being only 350*l.*, and the others small in proportion. The Company was originally strictly a trading Company, and its clerks and servants were paid chiefly by being allowed to trade on their own account. When the Company found it necessary to have troops for the defence of their factories, their military officers were paid in the same way. All were merchants and traders, from the governor, the commandant, and the chaplain, down to the youngest writer and ensign.

Now that they were princes with a large territory, and a formidable army, the steps by which they reached that eminence had been so sudden, and the consequences so unforeseen, that their servants still continued to be civil, military, and ecclesiastical traders: the old system remained unchanged.

But a change of circumstances necessarily called for a change of regulations. The relative situation of the English and natives was no longer the same: for instance, the receiving of

presents from native princes, or men of rank, had quite altered its nature. While the Company were mere traders, there could be no good reason for hindering their servants and the natives from mutually receiving and bestowing presents. The parties were on a level, bound to each other by common interest, and presents were nothing more than a mark of the good-will that subsisted between them; the consequence of their friendship or relations in trade, exhibited according to the usage and fashion of the country, of which the giving and receiving of presents formed a part.

In the altered situation of the Company, when their servants concluded treaties, influenced the fate of provinces, and made and unmade princes, things were essentially changed. Presents were now liable to become, not the sign and consequence of good-will, but the motive, and sometimes the guilty motive, of public acts; and great sums might be thus extorted, to the injury both of the natives and of the Company: and, indeed, this natural effect did ensue. The paramount influence of the English authority was abused, for purposes of private interest and selfish rapacity. Great fortunes were made in this way during the five years that Lord Clive was absent in England, and these benevolences became a most heavy burden on the men of rank and wealth in India.

To check this evil, the Court of Directors, as we have seen, ordered covenants against receiving presents to be entered into by all their servants.

The orders issued regarding the inland trade nearly shut up another great source of gain. During the five years in which the public servants had carried it on with such amazing profit, the export trade, as an inferior branch, had been left chiefly to free merchants and free mariners. The orders excluding the Company's servants from the inland trade now drove them back, once more, to foreign and general trade, but in more unfavourable circumstances.

They complained to the Directors that, by the course of events, which had done so much for the Company, they were placed in a worse situation than ever, and engaged in an unfavourable competition even with the free traders: that, instead of benefiting, they suffered by being in the Company's service, as they were confined to one spot by the Company's concerns, while the others could run over the country, and had nothing to engage them but their own interests. In this representation there was much truth; though the conclusion might have reached farther than either the Company or their servants would have been willing to allow.

Men who had been accustomed to look to

great and immediate returns for their capital, or for the mere use of their name, looked upon the restrictions under which they were now placed as the height of tyranny. The habits of indulgence and expense which they had acquired from the rapid influx of wealth, and the golden prospects which their situation had seemed to hold out to them, were bad preparations for returning to, or for acquiring, the patient, sober, and steady habits of business which general commerce requires. Lord Clive found the settlement in a ferment; and all ranks of the Company's servants resolved to throw every obstacle in the way of executing the Company's orders.

How he triumphed over the civil, as well as military, combinations which threatened ruin to the British ascendency in India, we have already seen: but if he triumphed, it was not by firmness alone; it was equally by the justice, the consideration, the policy, which guided all his measures.

He had all the powers of mind necessary for his new situation; but his instruments were very imperfect. He saw that a grand crisis had arrived in the Company's affairs; that their servants were brought into contact with men possessed of the greatest wealth and power, and whose fate they really held in their hands.

"Without proposing a reasonable prospect of independent fortunes," says one of his friends *. "it was ridiculous to hope that common virtue could withstand the allurements of daily temptation; or that men armed with power would abstain from the spoils of a prostrate nation."

Clive was particularly desirous, as we have seen, that the chief men in the administration of affairs, but especially the Governor, should be withdrawn from trade, and from whatever could warp the freedom of their opinions: it is a subject to which he often reverts in his private correspondence.

But to expect that the Directors would directly sanction large salaries to their servants from the profits of the Company's trade, or from their territorial revenues, was vain. It was quite at variance with the old maxims by which they were accustomed to regulate their concerns.

There seemed to be no alternative, therefore, but either to let things proceed in the ruinous course in which they now were, to enforce the covenants, and enter, unaided, on a hopeless struggle between private interest and public duty; or to find means, from such resources of the country as were not yet claimed by the Company, to pay the superior servants in an adequate

* Verelst's View, p. 113.

and ample manner; and this last he resolved to attempt.

"It was not expedient," says Clive himself, in his speech in the House of Commons*, "to draw the reins too tight. It was not expedient that the Company's servants should pass from affluence to beggary. It was necessary that some emoluments should accrue to the servants in general, and more especially to those in superior stations, who were to assist in carrying on the measures of Government. The salary of a councillor is, I think, scarcely 300*l.* per annum; and it is well known that he cannot live in that country for less than 3000*l.* The same proportion holds among the other servants. It was requisite, therefore, that an establishment should take place; and the Select Committee, after the most mature deliberation, judged that the trade in salt, betle-nut, and tobacco, under proper regulations, might effectually answer the purpose."

One difficulty had been removed when, about the time of the grant of the dewannee, the young Nabob, Nujum-ed-Dowlah, had yielded up to the Company the whole of the revenues of the three provinces, in consideration of a fixed annuity. The question, after that, no longer regarded the Nabob, or his revenues; it was only

* 30th March, 1772.

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between the Company, their servants, and the natives; and Clive believed that, by an arrangement regarding the salt trade, the interest of all could be conciliated: and it is to be recollected, that the Directors had ordered that the new plan should have a view to "the interest of the Company, and likewise of the Company's servants." *

It is unnecessary to enter into all the details of the plan finally adopted in September, 1765, which were chiefly arranged by Mr. Sumner. The salt trade was to be conducted solely by a society composed of all the higher officers of Government, civil and military; their capital was to consist of a certain number of shares; the civil servants, as low down as factors, the military, as low down as majors, were to hold shares; chaplains and surgeons had also their shares; the capital for carrying on the trade was to be furnished by the sharers, in their due proportions. The affairs of the Society were conducted by a committee; the salt was to be furnished to them by contractors, and was to be sold at various grand stations by agents, generally Europeans, appointed by the Committee, the purchasers from whom could carry and sell it over the country at pleasure; 35 per cent. on

* Letter of Directors, 1st June, 1764.

the price was allowed as a tax to the company*, who had now come into the Nabob's place; the selling price, at the different remote stations, was also fixed at rates 12 or 15 per cent. below what was found to have been the average rate of the twenty years preceding.

Besides providing ample allowances to the chief of the Company's servants, the great advantage of this plan was, that it allowed them to withdraw their attention wholly from trade.† They were sleeping partners of a sure and profitable concern, the whole details of which, without any care on their part, was managed by a committee devoted to the business.

The profits of this Society were, as might have been expected, very great. "The capital of the salt trade," says Clive, writing to Colonel Call‡, "is 32 lacs of sicca rupees, upon which the most moderate expect to make 50 per cent., clear of all charges; others, 75 per cent.; and, the most sanguine, 100 per cent. Take the lowest, and a councillor's and a colonel's profit will be 7000*l.* sterling per annum; a lieutenant-colonel's and junior merchant's, 3000*l.*; majors' and fac-

* This tax was not on the real value, but on a reduced estimate: and paid before it was carried into the country.

† Had the plan been allowed to proceed, the renunciation of trade would have been compulsory.

‡ 14th December, 1765.

tors', 2000*l.* These advantages, and a free open trade, are in lieu of all presents from the natives, and all perquisites disadvantageous to the Company, and dishonourable to the servants." And in a letter * to Mr. Palk, the Governor of Madras, after mentioning the large allowance that the trade would give to the different sharers, he adds, "This extraordinary indulgence is in lieu of perquisites; for I intend the Governor and Council shall take a most solemn oath at the Mayor's Court, in presence of all the inhabitants, that they shall receive no perquisites whatever, or other advantages, excepting what arises from their trade; and to this shall be added a penalty-bond of a very very large sum of money. These articles, upon my arrival, were altogether in the hands of the Company's servants and free merchants, and only yielded to the Company 60,000*l.* per annum, and to the Nabob nothing, for they did not even pay the 2½ per cent. duties. Neither will the method we are pursuing be attended with the least disadvantage to the inhabitants: the same hands who made and worked the salt are still employed at the same rates; and the salt in general will be sold at a much lower price than formerly. Formerly the salt was sold dear or cheap, according to the demand for that article:

* Dated 23d November, 1765.

we shall endeavour to fix upon a price for every market, and always sell it for the same."

The result of the first year's sales was very prosperous, and even exceeded expectation: insomuch that, in forming the plan for the following year, it was resolved to diminish the profits of the proprietors, and to raise those of the East India Company, the duty to whom was now fixed at 50 per cent., which, at a low valuation of the salt, was to produce about 160,000*l.* Clive had, however, in the course of his progress through the country, observed the inconvenience of employing European agents in the trade; and a very material improvement was introduced, by dispensing with their agency altogether, and selling the article at Calcutta, or where it was made, to the natives only, with permission to convey it wherever they pleased. In this way Europeans were totally removed from any direct interference with the natives in the interior, and the trade was as free as any monopoly can be. This second year's Society commenced in September, 1766.

Not long after it began its operations, letters from the Court of Directors reached Bengal, disapproving of the plan of the first year's Society, and commanding the trade to be thrown open, and left entirely to the natives. In coming to this resolution, they were not so much

influenced by any views of the particular merits or demerits of the new plan itself, as by consideration of the mischiefs which had for several years attended the general system of internal trade carried on by the English gentlemen with a high hand, free of duties. Their orders, repeatedly sent out, to pay the legal duties to the Nabob, and to keep within the meaning of the Emperor's firman, had been totally neglected, or provokingly evaded. Repeated revolutions had been the consequence, and immense suffering to the country. "We are fully sensible," say the Court of Directors *, "that these innovations, and illegal traffic, laid the foundation of all the bloodshed, massacres, and confusion which have happened of late years. We cannot suffer ourselves to indulge a thought towards the continuance of them, upon any conditions whatsoever. No regulations can, in our opinion, be formed, that can be effectual to prevent the like consequences which we have seen." They desire, however, that the duties, as forming part of the revenues of Bengal, should not be abolished. In a letter of the same date, to Lord Clive, the Directors, after bestowing the greatest and most merited praise on the penetration with which he had at

* Letter to Select Committee of Bengal, 17th May, 1766. Fourth Report of Secret Committee, App. No. 45.

once discerned their true interest in every branch of their concerns; the rapidity with which he had restored order, peace, and tranquillity; and the integrity which governed all his actions, proceed to give their resolutions on the inland trade. "The vast fortunes," they observe, "acquired in the inland trade have been obtained by a scene of the most tyrannic and oppressive conduct that ever was known, in any age or country. "We have been uniform in our sentiments and orders on this subject, from the first knowledge we had of it; and your Lordship will not, therefore, wonder, after the fatal experience we had of the violent abuses committed in this trade, that we could not be brought to approve it, even in the limited and regulated manner with which it comes to us, in the plan laid down in the Committee's proceedings. We agree in opinion with your Lordship on the propriety of holding out such advantages to our chief servants, civil and military, as may open to them the means of honourably acquiring a competency in our service; but the difficulty of the subject, and the short time we have at present to consider it, have obliged us to defer giving our sentiments and directions thereupon, until the next despatch." The letter concludes with entreaties to him to remain for another year in India, and with holding out the prospect of some solid perma-

nent retribution, corresponding to his most important services.

The real causes of the resolutions of public bodies do not always appear in their public acts. To deprive their servants of their principal means of subsistence, without substituting any authorised allowance in its place, was bad policy in itself, and was reducing Lord Clive, in the midst of his exertions, to a very painful dilemma. Mr. Scrafton, in a letter* to Lord Clive, explains their secret reasons. The Proprietors had begun to clamour for an increase of dividend, which the Directors thought unsuitable to the situation of the Company's affairs. "This," says he, "has induced the Directors to defer the consideration of the gratification of the servants on abolishing the salt trade. Such consideration could not be but for a vast sum; and if it had got wind that such gratifications were ordered, the Proprietors would be outrageous for an increase of the dividend. Though we cannot open our minds upon it, yet it appears to me an increase of dividend must take place at the Quarterly Court in June; and then the Court will be under no restraint, but will give a per centage on the revenues, in which the Governor will have a great share, in lieu of trade; the rest among the Committee, Council, colonels, and ten below

* 17th May, 1766.

Council, but no lower."—"Your Lordship may be assured it will take place; for, when the last paragraph was added to the letter to you, the Committee declared it was their meaning and intention to do it by the next ship."

The letters of the Directors, the first which Clive had received in answer to his communication on the plan which he had formed, as directed by them, for carrying on the internal trade, reached him only in December, 1766, a month before he left India. He had for some weeks been confined to his chamber by a very severe illness, from which his life was in danger. He now felt himself placed in a most painful predicament, between the Court of Directors and the immediate difficulties of his situation with the civil and military servants. He believed that, with long attention and care, he had succeeded in disarming the salt trade of most of its evils, and by its means had secured to the Company's superior servants a lawful for an unlawful income. But the commands of the Directors were positive; and, though he was of opinion that they were founded on mistake, it was his wish to conform to them. The Company, though aware of the address and spirit of command with which he had checked the machinations of their civil servants in 1765, were still ignorant, when their orders were given, of his still

more difficult triumph over the mutiny of their military officers. They had, most justly and wisely, deprived their servants of their means of illicit gain; they now rashly deprived them also of what had been substituted as a lawful provision; they referred these discontented and powerful men, who had vast wealth within their reach, to a future and uncertain time, when their masters should be at leisure to pay some attention to their immediate and urgent necessities. An inferior man would have hesitated and faltered: Clive saw that decision was necessary for the crisis. He could not undo his own work of pacification and reform. The affairs of the Society were too far advanced to be discontinued all at once. He therefore confirmed the grant to the Society, but declared that it was to terminate at the conclusion of the current year, the 1st of September, 1767.* At the same time, the Select Committee of Calcutta, by their letter of the 26th of Jauuary, 1767, while they mentioned that the orders for discontinuing the Society had been complied with, remonstrated strongly with the Court of Directors on the occasion; calling on them to review their opinion.

Such is an outline of the history of the Society of Trade during Clive's government. He formed

* See Fourth Report of Select Committee of the House of Commons, App. No. 58.

a society in unison, as he supposed, with the spirit of the orders of the Court of Directors, which desired him, in the new plan of trade intended to be formed, to consult the benefit of three parties — the Nabob, the Company, and its servants. The Nabob's interest had merged in the Company's. The interest of the natives, however, the most important of all, was consulted by their restoration to the benefits of the trade, from which recently they had nearly been excluded; and by the exclusion of Europeans from any participation in the details of it. How the interests of the Company's servants were to be consulted by any plan that admitted them to the profits, yet excluded them in every shape from the trade, it is not easy to imagine. Lord Clive and the Committee did, therefore, what then, and in all succeeding times, it has been found necessary to do, in India, and in every distant possession, to form and execute a plan on their own responsibility, and to leave the future approbation or disapprobation to their distant masters. Inconvenient as this may be, it is an inconvenience inseparable from distant legislation.

A few words may here be said on the future history of the salt trade. The Court of Directors, after receiving the letters of the Select Committee, still persisted in their desire of abolishing the Society, and of removing Euro-

peans from this and all other concern with the inland trade of the country. They therefore, by their letter of the 20th of November, 1767, written eighteen months after their former letter, ordered the Society of Trade to be abolished, and the salt-pans to be sold by public auction, excluding all Europeans from being bidders or owners, directly or indirectly. Instead of the benefits resulting to the senior servants from this trade, an allotment of 2½ per cent. on the net revenue of the dewannee was assigned to them in certain shares; and a small increase of pay to captains and subalterns.*

Meanwhile, in Bengal, when September, 1767, arrived, these last orders having not yet been received, nor indeed written, another year was allowed by Mr. Verelst, the new Governor, and his Council, to the Society of Trade, to collect their debts, and realise their capital. It was not till September, 1768, that it ceased; and the Court of Directors having, in December, 1769†, by a sudden and singular departure from their opinions, so strongly announced, sent out instructions to lay open the inland trade to all persons, as well natives as Europeans, a proclamation to that effect was published at Calcutta, on the 12th of December, 1770. The effect of this

*Fourth Report of Select Committee, App. No. 61.

† 15th December, 1769.

essential change in the Company's plans on the future prosperity of the provinces, it is no part of the present Memoir to investigate; but it is very plain, that, by admitting Europeans into the inland trade, in the state in which the country then was, they really did away with all the benefit that could in any way have been expected to arise from abolishing the monopoly.

But whether Lord Clive's opinions regarding the trade in salt were sound or not, one thing at least is evident, — he was perfectly conscientious in the advice he gave, and on the measures he adopted, on that subject. This is plain from his whole conduct, and from his correspondence, public and private, with numerous persons, while in India. Nor did his anxiety on the subject cease, even after he had reached England, when all private interest in the subject, if he can be supposed ever to have had any, must have been over. Finding accidentally, some months after his arrival, that the plan of abolishing the Salt Society continued to be entertained, he explained his views on the subject to the Committee of Treasury and Correspondence of the Directors, in a detailed and laboured letter.* He pointed out the advantages of the trade as then regulated, as the best fund that the Company

* Dated 28th August, 1767. Fourth Report of Select Committee, App. No. 59.

could appropriate for the payment, without grudging or envy, of their superior servants: that it enabled them to regulate the emoluments of their servants, according to their own wishes; that by it, their servants had the appearance of being paid, not by the Company, but by the profits of their own trade, — an advantage not attending any payment by a percentage on the revenue. "If you grant a commission upon the revenue," says he, "the sum will not only be large, but known to the world; the allowance being publicly ascertained, every man's proportion will at times be the occasion of much discourse, envy, and jealousy; the great will interfere in your appointments, and noblemen will perpetually solicit you to provide for the younger branches of their families." It is evident, that his views originated not in principles of political economy, but of policy, forced upon him by the circumstances in which India was placed. His efforts were directed to insure a desirable object, in what he deemed, not certainly the best, but the only practicable mode.

In spite of this remonstrance, the Committee came to the resolution of throwing the trade open, imposing only a duty of 10 rupees on the hundred maunds of salt. Lord Clive again addressed them*, showing that they were in reality

* Letter dated Bath, 14th November, 1767.

giving up 300,000*l.* per annum, for a tax of only 31,500*l.*; and pointed out that, even on their plan, the trade would continue in some degree a monopoly, and that the servants would still be concerned in it to what extent they pleased, under their banyans and black merchants. His expressions in writing the same day to Mr. Verelst, show how sincere and deep-rooted his opinions on the subject were. Sending him a copy of his letter to the Committee, he adds, "What attention they will pay to my representations I know not: but I have such confidence in your honour and zeal for the Company's welfare, that I cannot help hoping you will take care that the Company be not deprived of 300,000*l.* per annum, however peremptory the orders of the Directors may be."

The letter of the 20th of November, 1767, already mentioned, was written soon after. The only effect of this remonstrance was a change by which the duty was to be advanced to a sum not exceeding 120,000*l.* Lord Clive points out, in several confidential letters to Mr. Verelst, the want of information of the Directors on this occasion, and the pernicious consequences likely to result from the change. That he was sincere, admits not of a doubt. His opinions on the subject he maintained uniformly to the last hour

of his life, and the events seem to have justified his foresight.

The tax, as regulated by him, certainly was a monopoly, and so far was exceptionable; but he might justly maintain that the real question was, Are the evils arising from this monopoly, or from the licentiousness of the rulers of the country, if penuriously paid, most to be dreaded? and of this he had no doubt. Even from the question of the comparative merits of a monopoly and free trade, political considerations, unfortunately, could not be altogether excluded. The society of trade was abolished under pretence of being a monopoly. This was not, however, the real cause. That society excluded from the salt trade a body of powerful and wealthy Europeans, who raised a clamour, in name of the natives, but solely for their own private views. On the plan, as reformed by Lord Clive, the natives were restored to their former employment, and Europeans excluded. But when the trade was thrown open to all indiscriminately, natives and Europeans, the change, though in form the result of sound principles of government and of political economy, was really, in substance, quite the reverse. The two parties did not come into the field on equal terms; the society of trade had a direct interest that no oppression should be exercised on the natives in

their dealings over the country; and being composed of the leading men of the government, had the means of affording them protection. But when the trade was reduced to a scramble between Europeans having the whole authority of the country, and natives who had none; when redress was to be sought by the natives from their very rivals and competitors; their condition became hopeless; and that fact sufficiently accounts for the melancholy nature of the history of the inland trade in succeeding years.

Two charges connected with this transaction of the salt trade were afterwards brought against Lord Clive: the first, that he obstinately persisted in disobeying the orders of the Company for its abolition; the other, that by having a share in it as Governor, he in some measure deviated from his plan of not trading, and of deriving no pecuniary benefit to himself from his voyage to India.

As to the first, we have seen that several letters were certainly received from the Court of Directors, after his arrival in Bengal, declaring their decided hostility to their servants engaging in the inland trade at all, and especially in that of salt. But a comparison of dates has shown that these letters were directed, not against any measures of Lord Clive, which were not then

known, but against the grossly unjust and pernicious proceedings which took place before his arrival. To the letter of the Select Committee of Calcutta, of the 30th of September, 1765, detailing the plan for the first society of trade, an answer, dated the 17th of May, 1766, was received on the 8th of December following: and so far was Lord Clive from obstinately persisting in continuing the trade, as has been asserted, that on the 24th of the following month, while hardly yet recovered from a dangerous illness, he declared the society abolished, at the close of the season. He had fixed so limited a period as one year for its duration, because it was only experimental, and to admit of any change suggested by the Directors.

The second charge was, that, as a sharer in this society of trade, he had deviated from his intention expressed in his letter to the Company, not to improve his fortune by his voyage to India.

His share as Governor in the society of trade (a concern, the details of which were entirely confided to a committee, and the operations of which he knew only from their result) was certainly very different in its nature from private trade on his own account. To his intention not to increase his private fortune by the emoluments of his office, or by trade in any shape,

he religiously adhered. Of the allowances to the Governor, the honorary presents that could not be refused without giving offence, the proceeds of the Governor's share of the society of trade, with all other emoluments annexed to his office, he caused a distinct account to be kept. Out of it were defrayed his expenses as Governor, and by the surplus he did not benefit. He had taken with him to India three gentlemen: Mr. Maskelyne, his friend and near connection; Mr. Henry Strachey, his private secretary; and Mr. Ingham, his family physician; — no large establishment for a Governor leaving his family and going abroad in the circumstances Lord Clive did. The sums in question were employed in remunerating them, and some persons of his household; and by the account kept of these and of all other sums received by him from the time he left England till his return, which was communicated to the Company, and afterwards laid before Parliament, far from having added, in any respect, to his private fortune, as this charge supposes, it has never been disputed that there was a balance of 5816*l.* 16*s.* 9*d.* against it. If these gentlemen were remunerated, therefore, it was not at the Company's expense, by any extraordinary charges upon them; but at the expense of the Governor, who gave up to them the allowances which he might have re-

tained to himself.* The charge was really as unfounded as it was ungracious, and, it is to be observed, was brought against him by men who had shown no such pecuniary delicacy.

Of another charge, also brought some years after, against Lord Clive's administration, that of having fixed an improper rate of exchange between the gold and silver coinage of Bengal, it is not necessary to say much. In India, gold and silver coin are articles of trade even more directly than in most countries in the world, and the variation in their relative value is often extremely great. In the year 1766, a scarcity of silver existed in Bengal, from the quantity exported to China, from decreased importation, and other causes. It was known that there was much gold in the country, in various shapes; and to inexperienced political economists it seemed a very reasonable expedient to give a premium for its being brought out. A favourable rate was therefore fixed on the new gold mohur then coined. This certainly had the effect of bringing gold to the mint; but, as might have been foreseen, only increased the evil, by causing still more silver coin to be withdrawn from circulation. The bankers and shroffs of the country, who are proficients in the science of exchange, naturally

* See Clive's speech, 30th March, 1772, which contains an unanswerable defence of his conduct.

paid their demands in gold, and exported or hoarded the silver. The gold coin they were unwilling to receive at its legal value, without a large batta, or exchange, in reality to compensate its inferior intrinsic value as compared with silver, the ordinary circulation of the country. This necessary measure of self-defence was regarded as a trick or fraud in trade. The proclamation of 30th June, 1766, directing the coin to be taken at certain rates, was one of those ineffectual attempts to force circumstances, formerly so usual with politicians of every class and of every country. It was, of course, ineffectual; and necessarily occasioned no small inconvenience to merchants and retail traders. Its effects were chiefly felt after Clive had left India. The Court of Directors, from their correspondence, seems to have been nearly as much puzzled as the Council of Calcutta; though the fact, that the difference of market value between the gold and the silver coin rose to 17½ per cent., ought to have afforded an easy explanation of the difficulty.* Yet those who recollect the discussions, in our own times, in the British parliament, on the difference of value between the guinea and the bank note, and on the bullion

* See Verelst's View, p. 84.; App. p. 239.; and Sir James Steuart's Principles of Money applied to the present State of the Coin of Bengal, Works, vol. v.

question in general, will not be disposed to view with much surprise a similar difficulty that occurred in a distant country, half a century before.

Though these charges were brought against Lord Clive long afterwards, yet, as they all relate to India, it has been judged best to state them at this period of his career, when he was still engaged in his active services in that country.

Our attention has hitherto been too exclusively directed to Lord Clive's civil and military reforms, to admit of any connected view of the very important treaties which he negotiated with the native powers, and which really changed the face of India. We have seen that one of his first objects, after his arrival in Bengal, was to conclude a peace with Sujah-u-Dowlah, the Vizier, Nabob of Oude, and to make some arrangement with our ally, the King. The war, though successful, had long been carried on at an expense ruinous to the Company's finances. With these objects he resolved to combine a settlement with the young Nabob of Bengal (whose finances were in disorder), so as to place his and the Company's affairs on a definite and solid basis. Clive had left Calcutta on the afternoon of the 25th of June, 1765, and on the 9th of July writes to the Select Committee, that the business of Nujm-u-Dowlah's durbar was per-

fectly finished. By the arrangement then entered into, provision was made for the management of public affairs at the Nabob's court, and in the three provinces, the immediate administration of which was committed to Mahommed Reza Khan, Doolubram, and Jugget Seit, and regulations were signed by them and the Nabob for that purpose. A barrier was thus provided against the shifting policy and intrigues of a corrupt court, and a weak and ignorant prince. At the same time Lord Clive procured from the Nabob a sunnud for the reversion in perpetuity of his jaghire to the Company. But he now plainly saw that things could not stop where they were. The truth is, that it was now clear enough, that two independent governments could not exist in the country at the same time. The one must swallow up the other; and the Company having the sword in their hand, and not being disposed to recede, it was necessary to reduce the Nabob to a cipher. Two days afterwards* Clive writes to the Select Committee; — "We have often lamented that the gentlemen of the Council, by precipitating the late treaty, had lost the most glorious opportunity that could ever happen of settling matters upon that solid and advantageous footing for the Company, which no temporary invasion could endanger. The true and only

* 11th July, 1765.

security for our commerce and territorial possessions in this country is, in a manner, always to have it in our power to overawe the very Nabob we are bound by treaty to support, A maxim contrary to this has of late been much adopted; and from that fundamental error, as I may call it, have sprung the innumerable evils, or at least deficiencies, in our government, which, I have now the pleasure to inform you, are in a fair way of being perfectly removed.

"The Nabob, upon my representation of the great expense of such an army as will be necessary to support him in his government, the large sums due for restitution, and to the navy, together with an annual tribute, which he will be under a necessity of paying to the King, hath consented, and I have agreed, provided it should obtain your approbation, that all the revenues of the country shall be appropriated to those purposes, 50 lacs of rupees excepted. Out of this sum is to be defrayed all his expenses of every nature and denomination. Mahommed Reza Khan, however, being of a disposition extremely timorous, is desirous of having the payment of the cavalry and sepoys pass through his hands, though included in the said 50 lacs. This, I think, will be complied with.

"I am of opinion also, that certain stipends, out of the above mentioned sum, should be fixed

for the Begum, for the Chuta Nabob, and for the rest of the Nabob's brothers and nephews, Miriam's son included; or else we must be subject to frequent complaints from those quarters; for I am persuaded that the dependents and parasites of the present Nabob will always keep him in distress, be his income what it may. Although the sum proposed to be stipulated for the Nabob, considering the present great expenses and demands, may appear large, yet, by what I now learn, his expense exceeds the sum to be allowed; and although it is certain that neither his education nor abilities will enable him to appear to any advantage at the head of these great and rich provinces, yet, I think, we are bound in honour to support the dignity of his station, so far as is consistent with the true interest of the Company.

"The particulars of this matter may be farther adjusted in my absence by Mr. Sykes, to whom I have communicated my ideas, if the plan be approved of by the Select Committee; and the whole may be finally concluded to our satisfaction, upon the Company's being appointed the King's Duan, who will be empowered, by the nature of their office, as well as by the King's consent, to settle every point."

Writing the same day to Mr. Verelst, Lord Clive sufficiently characterises the Nabob by a

single trait. "He received the proposal of having a sum of money for himself and household at his will with infinite pleasure; and the only reflection he made, upon leaving me, was, 'Thank God! I shall now have as many dancing girls as I please.'"

It is not to be supposed that the Select Committee would object to a plan which threw the greater part of the revenue of Bengal into the hands of the Company, and the treaty was finally concluded in the course of the same month. The allowance made to the Nabob was raised to something more than 53 lacs of rupees.

Lord Clive, proceeding up the river, met the Vizier, as has been mentioned, at Benares. The fortune of war had been against him; his armies had been repeatedly defeated, and his capital, Lucknow, taken. He had given himself up to General Carnac, and was eager for peace. So early as the 2d of August, Lord Clive had an interview with him, and intimated his intention of restoring all his dominions, except Allahabad, worth 10 lacs yearly, and perhaps Corah, valued at 18. "His expressions of joy and gratitude upon this occasion," say Lord Clive and General Carnac, in a joint letter to the Select Committee*, "were many and warm. Such an instance of generosity in a victorious enemy,

* 3d August, 1765.

exceeded his most sanguine expectations, and we doubt not will be the best foundation of that union and amity which we so earnestly wish to secure. He consents to pay to the Company 50 lacs for indemnification. These terms we think moderate and equitable, both for him and the Company."

This matter being arranged, Lord Clive hastened on to Allahabad, to meet the King: the first visit took place on the 9th of August. The King's demands were numerous, but Clive was steady to his purpose. The demand on the Nabob of Bengal for 32 lacs of rupees as arrears, and of 5½ lacs annually of jaghires, were refused, with several others. It was finally settled, on the 11th, that the King should receive annually, as revenue from Bengal, the sum of 26 lacs, with the countries of Allahabad and Corah, yielding a farther revenue of 28 lacs, from Sujah-u-Dowlah, as a royal demesne for supporting his dignity. "This last cession," says Lord Clive and General Carnac, writing to the Select Committee*, "we very readily consented to, as Sujah-u-Dowlah made not the least objection, well knowing that, after our departure, he could easily settle this matter with the King, to the satisfaction of both parties." Lord Clive had,

* 12th August, 1765.

it seems, wished to restore Corah to the Vizier, making over Allahabad only to the King.

"We then presented the King with two arzies (petitions), desiring he would grant to Nujm-u-Dowlah the Nizamut of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, and to the Company, the Dewanny of the same provinces; to both of which His Majesty has signed his fiat, and the proper instruments for both are now drawing out."

The King, at the same time, granted firmans confirming to the Company for ever all the lands round Madras and elsewhere assigned to them by the Nabob of Arcot; as well as a free gift of the five northern Circars. This was the first formal grant or confirmation by the King to the Company, of these territories. The grant of Lord Clive's jaghire, to the Company, was likewise confirmed.

The King was eager to induce Clive to march to Delhi and replace him on the throne. But this was steadily refused. Clive's policy was to interpose a friendly native power between our territories and the Afghans, and as far as possible the Mahrattas. He saw that the King, from his weak character and large pretensions was quite unfit for such a purpose; and that none was so proper, both from character and power, as Sujah-u-Dowlah. This was one cause why he was anxious to have strengthened him,

by restoring Corah. He wished to induce the King to reside quietly in the Company's territories; but finding this impracticable, gave him to understand that the Company could not join him as a party in any of his ambitious enterprises, beyond the limits of their own territories.

Such was the conclusion of these important negotiations, by which the English East India Company became the real sovereigns of Bengal, Bahar, Orissa, and other extensive territories. In these provinces they now stood in the place of the Nabobs, and had gained a right to levy and dispose of the whole revenues under some very moderate burthens. They were no longer dependent on the regularity of native princes for the payment of their troops, or support of their establishments. The Nabob of Bengal was become a puppet in their hands, of little use, but as a cover to their dealings with European powers. Clive estimates the annual clear gain to the Company, including their former possessions of Burdwan, &c., and after paying the King, the Nabob, and all other expenses, as not short of 122 lacs, or 1,650,000*l.* *

Clive had received from the King, in 1758, a sunnud appointing him to the high rank of a

* Letter to Court of Directors, 30th September, 1765.

munsubdar of six thousand foot, and of five thousand horse, with the title of Zubdit-al-mulk, Nazir-ed-Dowla, Sabat Jung, Behader.* The title of Sabat Jung he had originally, as already mentioned, received from the Nabob of Arcot, for his gallant exploits in that prince's service, and by that title he always continued to be known in Bengal. He now received some augmentation of sounding titles, but what they were does not appear.

While Clive was engaged in these public duties he did not intermit in the regularity of his correspondence with his friends in England. Some extracts from his letters will show the light in which he considered his own situation and transactions.

†[The following letter‡ to Mr. Salvadore, whom he employed as a man of business, merits to be preserved as a proof of Clive's disinterested conduct during this his last period of service in India: —

"I return you many thanks for your obliging letter, and for the very favourable opinion you

* The illustrious, the chosen of the kingdom arranger of the state, firm in war.

† The few pages that follow, enclosed between brackets, contain the last fragment of the Memoir written by Sir John Malcolm.

‡ Dated Calcutta, 25th September, 1765.

are pleased to entertain of my abilities, as well as disposition to do my duty to the Company. It must be my own fault if I do not answer the expectations of all the real and disinterested proprietors; as for the occasional ones, and those who act from resentment and selfish principles, I hold them in too much contempt to cast away one thought about them.

"If I was to dwell upon the situation of the Company's affairs in Bengal, both civil and military, a volume would not be sufficient. However, I have the satisfaction of informing you, that I have already made a great progress towards reforming those enormous abuses of power, which cry aloud for redress. The inhabitants have been laid under contribution by both civil and military, their goods taken from them at an under price, and presents of money have either been extorted from them, or given for interfering in the affairs of government by insisting on men of high employments being turned out, and others appointed in their room. The gentlemen having the revenues of the country, amounting to upwards of 3,000,000*l.* per annum at their command, were making such hasty strides towards independency, that in two years' time I am persuaded the Company would not have had one servant upon this establishment above the rank of a writer. In short, if the Di-

rectors do not behave with spirit and integrity, and the Proprietors lay aside their animosities, they will become answerable to the nation and to Parliament, for being the cause of losing the greatest advantages which ever have happened to England since it has been a nation.

"As for myself, although tempted on all sides by offers of riches without bounds, I have refused every thing; and I am the greatest villain upon earth, if either I or any one dependent upon or belonging to me, with my knowledge, either directly or indirectly, benefit ourselves the value of one farthing, except what shall be specified in an account current which I intend laying before the Directors, upon my arrival in England. Indeed, if I suffered myself to be corrupted, I could not with any face undertake (in conjunction with the Committee who have heartily and unanimously joined me) the reformations which are essentially necessary for the Company's welfare.

"The King has granted to the Company for ever, with the approbation and consent of the Nabob, all the revenues which shall remain after paying him a certain tribute, and allowing a sum sufficient for the dignity and support of the Nabob. The Company's income exceeds 2,000,000*l.* sterling per annum, and their civil and military expenses in future never shall ex-

ceed 700,000*l.* per annum, in time of peace, and 1,000,000*l.* in time of war. For further particulars, let me refer you to Mr. Walsh. With regard to the French forces, I shall put those of the Company upon so respectable a footing, that all the powers of Europe can have no chance of succeeding, without first landing, and being supported by the powers of the country; and that appears very impracticable, since I have lately acquired a grant from the King of five northern provinces, those the French formerly possessed."

Clive's correspondence with his historian Orme appears at this period to have revived, and he evidently looks to him as the transmitter of his fame to posterity * :—

"I have wrote so many letters, and gone through such a scene of public business, that I cannot attempt describing to you any part of our proceedings in this part of the world. Scrafton, Walsh, and Colonel Smith will furnish you with abundant matter of surprize and astonishment. Let it suffice to say, that fortune seems determined to accompany me to the last; every object, every sanguine wish, is upon the point of being completely fulfilled, and I am arrived at the pinnacle of all I covet, by affirming the Company shall, in spite of all envy, malice, faction, and resentment, acknowledge they are

* Calcutta, 29th September, 1765.

become the most opulent company in the world, by the battle of Plassey; and Sir Hannibal Hotpot shall acknowledge the same.

"I am preparing plans in abundance for you. You shall have very exact charts of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, and of the Mogul empire as far as Delhi at least. A map of the Ganges likewise, and all the other rivers of consequence."

The following letters to his cousin Harry and to his father are pleasing proofs that his important occupations never cooled his mind from his duties and feelings as a relation or a friend:—

"I have received* your letter of 22d of November, 1764, by which I find you are all in health, though not so happy as when I was among you. I make no doubt of once more contributing towards that happiness, though not quite so soon as I expected, when in England, owing to the length of our passage. I have pitched upon the beginning of December, 1766, for resigning this government; and nothing but my death shall prevent it. General Carnac, myself, and the rest of our family, propose coming most of the way overland; and shall, in all probability, be in London some time in April, 1767.

* Letter to Harry Clive, Esq. dated Calcutta, 25th September, 1765.

"I have been seven hundred miles up the country, and have established a firm and lasting peace, I hope, with the Great Mogul and his vizier, Shuja Dowlah. I have seen much of his Majesty, and he has appointed me one of his first omrahs, or nobles, of his empire, with an immense title, not worth sixpence in England. Touching all these matters, I must refer you to Mr. Walsh.

"I am glad you have put a stop to Stycke expenses: they became enormous, and it will be time enough to go on with them upon my arrival in England; but I approve greatly of your repairing Walcot, and making it fit for Lady Clive's reception. The only concern I feel arises from a conviction of what she must suffer from so long an absence.

"With regard to myself, I have full employment, and enjoy my health rather better than in England, though I find I cannot bear the heat so well as formerly, which makes me determined to quit the country as soon as possible."

"I rejoice," he writes* to his father, "to hear from others, though not from yourself, that, notwithstanding the accident which has happened to one of your eyes, you retain both your spirits, appetite, and health. It is impossible, wihout a miracle, to enjoy the blessings of life

* 24th September, 1765.

in that perfection in our latter days as in the days of youth; but I really think your temperance and the goodness of your constitution will carry you through life with ease and satisfaction to yourself to an age nearly equal to that of your aunt Judy.

"Although I enjoy better health than in England, India is by no means agreeable to me, separated as I am from my wife, children, and dearest relations. The length of our passage will make my absence one year more than I intended, but this you may be assured of, that nothing shall detain me in Bengal beyond the beginning of December, 1766; and I hope to see you all in good health and spirits, some time in April, 1767.

"I have been seven hundred miles up the country, and have been very conversant with His Majesty, the Great Mogul. He has made me one of the first omrahs, or nobles, of his empire. I have concluded a peace for the Company, which I hope will last, and obtained from the King a grant of a revenue of 2,000,000*l.* sterling per annum for them for ever; and, what is more, I have put them on a way of securing this immense revenue, in such a manner that it is almost impossible to deprive the Company of it, at least for some years to come.

"With regard to myself, I have not benefited,

or added to my fortune one farthing, nor shall I; though I might, by this time, have received 500,000*l.* sterling. What trifling emoluments I cannot avoid receiving shall be bestowed on Maskelyne, Ingham, and Strachey, as a reward for their services and constant attention upon my person. I am much obliged to the Doctor for his care of my health: he is worth about 2000*l.* already. This ship, sent express, will bring the Company the most important news they ever received; and, if they are not satisfied with mine and the Committee's conduct, I will pronounce there is not one grain of honour or integrity remaining in England. The reformation I am making, in both the civil and military branches, will render the acquisition of fortunes not so sudden or certain, as formerly. This, added to the shortness of my stay in India, induces me to think Captain Sempill had better stay in England, where we may serve him by our interest at home. Remember me in the most affectionate manner to my mother. She has acted a great part in life. The uniformity of her conduct with regard to her children must, at the same time it affords her the most pleasing reflections, influence them to entertain the highest respect and veneration for so deserving a parent. I will most certainly write to her, and

to my brothers and sisters, who have my most affectionate wishes."

In numerous other private letters he dwells upon the same subject.] *

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Much of Clive's time was devoted to examining and improving the details and management of different branches of the public service. The increasing expense of the military establishment had been called to his notice by the Directors, before he went to Bengal; and he entered with great activity into the task of devising plans for reducing its expenditure. Besides the heavy charge for double batta, he found the charges for buildings and fortifications exhorbitantly high, and the work never completed. Of the surgeons' accounts, too, he repeatedly complains as enormous; and mentions that, on investigation, it was found that men had been charged for, as being in the hospital, months after they were dead. These abuses he attempted firmly and assiduously to correct; and his known experience in military matters, joined with the particular knowledge of commissariat concerns acquired while he served in that department, enabled him to place the whole on a better footing.

* Vide note on p. 129.

Though less conversant with revenue matters, he applied his powerful mind to that subject also. It was his uniform practice to promote the most intelligent and active men to the head of each line; and in the revenue department he seems to have been fortunate in having the co-operation of Mr. Verelst and Mr. Sykes. His plan, in revenue concerns was, to innovate as little as possible; to avoid all impositions burdensome to the cultivator, however productive; and to support the respectability and usefulness of the upper classes of natives, by maintaining them in as easy and opulent circumstances as was practicable. He saw the mischief of the frequent changes in the demands made upon the ryots, and proposed to introduce the system of leases for their protection. The revenue seems to have been very flourishing; and the ryots in easier circumstances in his time than they were some years afterwards. Writing to Mr. Verelst *, he says, "The 20th of this month we hold the punah; and, by what I can learn, the kistabundy for next year will amount to 172 lacs, which is 12 lacs more than this year; to which, if you add 12 lacs of rupees which Mahommed Reza Cawn proposes cutting off from the Nabob's allowance, being for useless horse, elephants, buffaloes, camels, &c. the increase will

* Mootejyl, 19th April, 1766.

be 24 lacs. If we mean to avoid giving umbrage to the European powers, and to keep up the appearance of the present form of government, we ought not to exact one farthing of revenue more from the province. For my own part, I think, after we have made this year's experiment, and, by the regular payment of the rents, find we have not over-rated the countries, that if Bengal was let out for five, six, or seven years, it would be for the advantage of the Company, of individuals, and add stability to our possessions by inspiring the inhabitants with just ideas of our justice and moderation." Writing, a few days after *, to Mr. Palk, he touches on the same subject: — "Abundance of business, and a good deal of bad health arising from the heat of the weather, hath prevented me from being so punctual a correspondent as I promised to be when I took my leave of you at Madras. However, I will now acknowledge the receipt, as well as return you thanks for your last letters of the 24th March and 4th April. We have been already near a month at this place, in order to ascertain the revenues of Bengal for next year. Upon the whole, what with cutting off useless expenses and unnecessary kistabundy, the Company will receive an increase for Bengal only

* Mootejyl, 25th April, 1766

of 24 lacs. Here, in my opinion, we should hold our hands. To attempt farther increase will be drawing the knot too tight. It will neither be to the honour or advantage of the Company. In the end, it would be impolitic: individuals who are of good families, who have been used to live in state, and who have been intrusted with power, must have wherewithal to support some part of that dignity which has always been kept up in this country." In the course of the same year, in answering the letter of a public servant who had proposed a plan for increasing a particular branch of the revenue, he writes *, "The Company's revenues are already immense; nor can I think of increasing them by the least oppressive mode. If, however, the abuses you mention be real, and can be remedied without distressing the ryots, they shall not escape unnoticed." He was decidedly hostile to the plan, which had been already introduced, of letting lands by auction; and was anxious that the ryot should labour in his fields at ease, free from the apprehension of change.†

* Letter to Mr. Blomer, Dinagepore, 22d September, 1766.

† There can be little doubt that the ryot was in Bengal, as in other parts of India, in reality a proprietor of the land: a circumstance which afterwards, in making the permanent settlement, on English or Mussulman ideas, was unfortunately overlooked. See Colonel Briggs's valuable and too little known work, on the Land Tax in India. Lond. 1830. 8vo.

It is quite unnecessary, as it would be painful, to enter into particulars regarding the corruption which prevailed at this time in every rank of the service: the fact is sufficiently known. Clive's efforts to check it made him many and powerful enemies. In a letter to Mr. Verelst, he mentions a member of council who, he found, had conditioned to receive 150,000 rupees from the Rajah of Burdwan: he desires that gentleman to ascertain the facts. "It may be necessary to have such anecdotes," says he*, "to frighten people into their duty to the Company, if no other use be made of them. I hear a certain gentleman employs spies to watch all our actions, yours and Sykes's in particular; but we may serve him as Scipio did those sent by Hannibal, lead them at noonday through every department in which we are concerned, and then dismiss them, telling them they may go and tell their masters all they know." Writing, on another occasion †, to Verelst and Sykes, when thwarted, from corrupt motives, by a man at the very head of affairs: — "If you think," says he, "that I am endeavouring to stem this torrent of corruption which threatens to overwhelm the whole settlement, and if you feel within your own breasts that pleasing satisfaction which I enjoy from a

* Letter, 29th December, 1765.

† 8th July, 1765.

consciousness that I am acting upon principles of honour and integrity, I am persuaded you will support the measures we have so zealously adopted; and we shall at last triumph over bad hearts and bad heads." — "Our disinterested conduct," says he to another correspondent, when concluding the treaties with the King and Vizier*, "must be admired and applauded by all virtuous and good men; and if there be men base enough to disapprove of what we are about, we may all retire to live happy, and upon the testimony of a good conscience." He frequently, in the midst of the opposition and annoyances to which he was exposed, seeks for consolation in this manly and honourable strain of thinking.

No man knew the sepoy force of India better, or employed it more successfully, than Clive; and it is interesting to ascertain his ideas, both on its composition, and the dangers that might be supposed eventually to attend its use. "You mention the number of sepoys as an alarming circumstance," says he, writing, after his return to England †, to one of the committees of Directors, "and I allow that the Company's chief danger arises from thence, and from the discipline. But I am of opinion, that so long as they are regularly paid, treated with humanity, and not

* 10th August, 1765. † 28th August, 1767.

flattered with promises never meant to be performed, no danger is to be apprehended. Sepoys are the most faithful and attached people in the universe; and being also men of reason, they are thoroughly convinced, that they are upon a much better footing with us than they can be with any of the natives, be their rank what it may. Their attachment, as I have observed, is strong; but they know no other than to those who feed and clothe them. Much of the supposed danger is avoided by our having separated and divided our sepoys into three brigades, so that they can never make a revolution general, nor can they hold cabals of an alarming nature. The best additional security I can think of, is to have each battalion composed of an equal number of Gentoos and Mussulmen, and to encourage a rivalship of discipline between them." — "There is one step *," says he, on another occasion, "to be taken with regard to the sepoys, which, I think, will bring them to the greatest perfection sepoys can be brought to; viz. the officers commanding the sepoys to run in that corps only; by which means, all the officers will understand the language, without which it is impossible to bring the sepoys to that pitch of discipline which will make them truly

* Letter to Colonel Smith, 23d August, 1765.

formidable." It will be recollected that at this early period of the service, regiments were but recently formed and brigaded; and the officers were taken for the sepoy corps from the European infantry, and were not yet attached permanently to the former.

The fatigue, bodily and mental, which Clive underwent during the second year of his residence in India, when engaged in counteracting the seditious movements of the civil and military services, had the unfavourable effects that might have been expected on a constitution so exhausted as his; yet the strong invitations which he then received from the Directors to remain another year in India, and his own desire to strengthen and confirm the government which he had saved from anarchy, and perhaps from ruin, induced him to revolve in his mind the possibility of complying with their request; and in some of his letters, written in the summer of 1766, he intimates a doubt whether he may not attempt to remain another year to complete his work.

But in the end of October he was attacked by a bilious disorder, which, increasing in severity, rendered him, early in November, incapable of attending to business. It is, indeed, surprising that this attack should have been so long delayed. From the moment he arrived in Bengal,

his mind had been kept invariably on the stretch, by a succession of painful and trying exertions. He had travelled much in the midst of the monsoon, and in the hottest season. On one ocaasion, he writes to Mr. Verelst*, "I have not had three hours' sleep any day or night, since I left Mootyjil," a fortnight before; and, even during the period when he thus travelled in a burning climate†, he continued anxiously corresponding at every interval of his journey, on the subject of an alarming mutiny, which threatened destruction to all his plans of public improvement. He had difficulties to encounter on every side, reforms to be

* 21st May, 1766.

† Mr. Campbell, writing to Mr. Strachey, who accompanied Lord Clive in his rapid journey to Benares the preceding year, gives a lively idea of the speed of the travellers. "You complain of my silence, but without reason. There are four or five letters on their way to you. But how should the dawks, or the devil himself, overtake you travelling at such a rate? Besides, you are everywhere and nowhere, sometimes travelling by land, sometimes by water. How, or where, am I to address you? The facetious Dean Swift tells Lord Peterborough that the ministry were obliged to write *at* him, not *to* him. I must do the same. Like his Lordship, you are in perpetual motion. You are now at Benares: a week hence you will be at Allahabad; a month more will carry you to Delhi. From thence I expect you will shape your course north-east towards China, and give us the slip, by taking your passage to Europe from Canton." Letter, August 10. 1765.

made, in which he was obliged to depend for success, more on the energy of his own mind, than on the support of the service, or of his co-adjutors. He had the ungracious office of interfering at every step with the pecuniary emoluments of the majority of his countrymen of every class. Few constitutions could have supported the anxiety he endured. A less vigorous mind would have sunk under the fret and annoyance of nearly two years' warfare of this exhausting kind: his constitution only sank under the fatigue. The strongest proof how severe his illness became, is afforded by the total interruption of his correspondence from the 29th of November to the 27th of December, during which period no letter appears to have been written by himself, the correspondence being entirely conducted in his name by Mr. Strachey. It has already been remarked that his regularity and constancy in correspondence were quite exemplary. His letters of business were answered the moment they were received. This steady regularity, too often despised by inferior men, was one of the means by which he did so much. With him it was grown into a habit; but the habit was a proof of the energy of a mind eager to accomplish, in the most perfect way, the business in which it is engaged.

It was during this illness that the letter, al-

ready alluded to, from the Court of Directors, arrived *, disapproving of the Society of Trade, but loading him with praises for his beneficial management of their affairs, entreating him to continue in the government for another year, and holding out the hope of ample remuneration for the sacrifice he was invited to make. It must be acknowledged, that the request of the Court of Directors was couched in terms sufficiently flattering. They approve of all that he had done. "When we consider," say they †, "the penetration with which your Lordship at once discerned our true interest in every branch, the rapidity with which you restored peace, order, and tranquillity, and the unbiassed integrity that has governed all your actions, we must congratulate your Lordship on being the happy instrument of such extensive blessings to those countries; and you have our sincerest thanks for the great and important advantages thereby obtained for the Company."—"We have the most perfect sense of your Lordship's disinterestedness in every part of your conduct, and we shall not fail to represent this to the proprietors, and shall, at the same time, inform them of the

* 8th December, 1766.

† Letter of the Court of Directors to Lord Clive, 17th May, 1766, pars. 2. and 11.; Third Report of Select Committee; App., No. 74.

many great advantages your Lordship has obtained for the Company; but we fear, my Lord, past experience will teach them, as it does us, that the permanency of those advantages will depend much on your Lordship's continuing in India till you have seen the regulations firmly established for the conducting those important affairs. Another year's experience, and peaceable enjoyment of our acquisitions, might fix them on a basis that might give hopes they may be as lasting as they are great; and there is no doubt, my Lord, but the general voice of the proprietors, indeed, we may say, of every man who wishes well to his country, will be to join in our request, that your Lordship will continue another year in India. We are very sensible of the sacrifice we ask your Lordship to make, in desiring your continuance another year in Bengal, after the great service you have rendered the Company, and the difficulties you have passed through in accomplishing them, under circumstances in which your own example has been the principal means of restraining the general rapaciousness and corruption which had brought our affairs so near the brink of ruin. These services, my Lord, deserve more than verbal acknowledgments; and we have no doubt that the proprietors will concur with us in opinion, that some solid and permanent retribution, ade-

quate to your great merits, should crown your Lordship's labours and success."

Clive was not insensible to the voice of praise, and still less to the call of ambition; but no principle was stronger with him than a sense of duty. He had truly observed, some time before, in writing to Mr. Palk*, "It seems I am strongly solicited to remain in India another year, and a promise is to be made me about perpetuating my jaghire. If I could render the Company more essential service by stopping than returning, and the situation of affairs made such a sacrifice necessary, I should not hesitate one moment about complying with their request, without being tempted by the bait of a jaghire. This does not appear to be the case at present; and, I think, all that depends on me will be effected in the space of two or three months; and, if the necessity of continuing another year does not appear in a stronger light than it does at present, I shall most certainly depart in January or February next." The letter of the Directors, just quoted, arrived on the 8th of December, after his complaint had made an alarming progress; and it appears, by a letter of Mr. Strachey, of the 13th, that Lord Clive had made up his mind, as a matter of necessity, to

* 17th October, 1766.

embark for England in about a month from that time. In a letter to his friend Mr. Palk, of the 30th of the same month, he says, "My state of health will not permit me more than to acknowledge the receipt of your several favours of the 20th, 27th, and 30th of September, and 7th, 11th, and 27th of October. The discussion of political points I cannot attempt at present, though I find myself recover daily. The Court of Directors have been very strenuous in soliciting me to continue another year in India. They have loaded me with compliments, and given me as much additional power as I could have wished. But the situation of the Company's affairs does not require that I should sacrifice another year in this climate; and even if it did call upon me to make such a sacrifice, it would be in vain. The very severe attack of bile that I have been struggling with for many weeks puts it beyond a doubt, that I could not survive, and be of use to the Company in India another year."

His constitution from his youth had been subject to nervous attacks. He now suffered from derangement of the biliary system, which affected his health to a degree from which it never fully recovered, and which may be considered as having finally hastened his end. It was occasionallyattended with spasms, of which

the violence endangered his life. In the intervals of comparative ease, however, he continued to direct the affairs of the government. He had used great exertions to improve the civil service, on which depended the prosperity of the country. Many of those then at the head of it, from various causes, were unfit to have any great share in conducting the administration of public affairs. Some were too exclusively devoted to self-interest, and were lax in their principles. The rapid fortunes that had been made of late years had sent home a considerable proportion of the most active of the older servants; others had been forced to resign, or had been dismissed for malversation in office; and many others had fallen in the massacre of Patna. Those next in succession were in general young men of no experience, of luxurious and dissipated habits, who, having been brought up in a bad school, were strangers to subordination and to the restraints of duty. Clive, sensible that to place such men near the head of a government, was to undo all that he had done, and that no government can be carried on without fit instruments, had asked from the Madras Government four of its ablest civil servants*, who were accordingly sent, and placed in Coun-

* Messrs. Russell, Rumbold, Aldersey, and Kelsall.

cil. This necessary act made him unpopular, and created many and powerful enemies. But Clive was not a man to shrink back from his course when supported by conscious rectitude, and by a firm persuasion that he was acting for the benefit of his employers and of the public. He supported the Madras servants against all the combinations formed to disgust and annoy them, and at his departure left them all high in office. By that, and similar acts of energy, he did all that one individual could do to remedy a vicious system; and had his plans been firmly executed by his successors, and supported instead of being opposed and tampered with by the Court of Directors, the history of India for the ensuing twenty years might have afforded a brighter and more pleasing retrospect than, unfortunately, it now does.

Clive was in particular most desirous that, after his departure, the Select Committee, the real engine of government, should be composed of the ablest and most upright men in the country. He left the chief direction of affairs with perfect confidence in the hands of Mr. Verelst, a man of honour and intelligence*; but he was

* Mr. Campbell, in a letter to Mr. Strachey, 18th August, 1765, gives an instance of Mr. Verelst's good temper. "Mr. Verelst is [illegible]ernally losing by water what he gains by land. While he was at dinner with me yesterday, advice was

anxious to add to his strength by placing about him other men of talent. Among these he was particularly desirous that Mr. Sykes, in whom he had great confidence, should reside in Calcutta, to be near the seat of government: but that gentleman preferred remaining in the situation he then held as resident at Moorshedabad. Clive's remonstrances on this occasion are very honourable to him: — "I have received your letter," says he *, "urging many reasons against your residing at Calcutta, when Mr. Verelst came to the chair. Your intention of declining the government, I must confess, is the only one that seems to carry any weight. Your situation I believe, is a very agreeable one, and your conduct, I am persuaded, will bring advantage to the Company and honour to yourself. Yet let us not forget, Sykes, the principles upon which you and I have hitherto acted, of sacrificing private convenince to public good. To doubt my friendship, because I cannot carry it to such lengths, is not to know me. I have loved you as a brother; yet a brother cannot alter my sentiments of

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brought that a vessel of his, worth 14,000 rupees, had foundered at sea. But he is callous to such accidents as would make me run mad. He called for a glass of wine, and said he would get up the loss. This is true philosophy."

* 2d October, 1766.

what is right and wrong. If you are fully convinced that your health will not permit you to live in Calcutta, and for that reason, among others, you mean to decline the government, there may be reasons given in abundance for remaining in your present station; and, among the rest, that of your being the most fit for such an employment. To conclude: this matter must be decided by my successor, Mr. Verelst, after my departure. I have given you my sentiments, which are consistent with my friendship for you, and my duty to the Company."

A letter to Mr. Cartier, one of the last he wrote in India, shows a similar anxiety for the public interest. Mr. Cartier, like Mr. Sykes, wished to take no active share in the general concerns of the government, but to remain, performing local duties, at an out station. Lord Clive, who had a favourable opinion of his qualifications, had urged him to conquer this repugnance; and Mr. Cartier finally gave his consent. "The receipt of your friendly letter *," says Lord Clive, "and your acceptance of being nominated one of the Select Committee, with so much cordiality, has afforded me more real satisfaction than I have felt for these many months. I can now leave India with satisfaction

* 22d January, 1767.

to myself, because I leave it in tranquillity, and the chief management of these important and extensive concerns in the hands of men of honour, and approved probity and abilities.

"Be assured, my good Sir, you will not have to encounter many of those disagreeable circumstances which you seem to apprehend in your letter to Mr. Verelst. That unthankful task has fallen to my lot. The Select Committee, and Committee of Inspection, have already made every regulation for the public good which can be desired or thought of; so that it only rests with you, gentlemen, to keep matters in the same channel, and not to relax in your authority, or let yourselves down, by declining to support the dignity of your station.

"A gentleman endowed, like Mr. Cartier, with a good capacity and solid judgment, of a generous and disinterested way of thinking, cannot fail of proving a very deserving servant to the Company, and of acquiring honour for himself, if he will but have a little more confidence in himself." After assuring him that, if he finds his new situation at Calcutta agreeable, he will use his interest to have him named Mr. Verelst's successor in the government, he continues: — "The state of my health is such, that I cannot continue in it (the government) another year, with any prospect of doing the Company ser-

vice: indeed, I do not think I should survive another month; I have, therefore, determined to resign the government.

"The General, myself, and other friends, take our departure on Monday next.

"I remain, dear Sir,

"Your affectionate friend, ever,

"CLIVE."

Lord Clive had always intended to return home over-land, and had arranged with several of his friends to accompany him; but the state of his health put an end to this long-cherished project.

When he was thus preparing to embark for his native country, broken as he was in health and constitution, and numerous as the enemies were whom his conduct had raised up against him, he might still look back with proud and generous satisfaction on the great sacrifice which he had made, and the splendid effects which it had produced. In the short space of twenty months he had quelled the opposition of the civil service, had dismissed the most culpable, and endeavoured to infuse a better spirit into those left; by his firmness, and, perhaps, still more by the magic influence of his name, he had subdued the dangerous spirit of mutiny among the military officers, after it had broken out in overt acts;

had sent off the ringleaders without resistance; had introduced new officers in their room, pardoned the less guilty, and restored them to their rank and confidence; he had concluded an advantageous peace with the Nabob-Vizier, by which he secured a large contribution for the Company, to pay the expenses of the war, and gained two provinces for the emperor, our ally; he had farther secured for him an annual tribute out of Bengal; he had acquired for the Company a grant of the dewannee, or rather, in reality, of the revenues and government of the three great provinces; by means of which, and of an agreement with the Nabob, the whole political power came into the hands of the English, who, from that moment, were sovereigns, and the effective arbiters of India: for the names of Nabob and Emperor, unsupported by adequate military force, were but sounds. The Company's debts in India had been reduced, and nearly extinguished; their large investments provided, chiefly without drawing on home; the expenses of the various establishments had been examined and reduced with a liberal economy; the forces were never in a more efficient state, and never supported at so small an expense. His perfect knowledge of every part of the service, and his resolute determination, produced a silent acquiescence in reductions proposed by him, which, perhaps,

would have excited the loudest murmurs had they come from any other quarter. And, after all reductions had been made, he might justly boast that he left the various services the best and most liberally paid in the world. He had checked the misrule which had desolated the provinces, and imposed fetters on the cupidity of the ruling caste, which were, unfortunately too soon removed after his departure: he had restored the course of justice to its original channel, and the natives to their wonted trade and commerce. Their political power was, indeed, gone; hardly a semblance of it remained; but the ordinary and daily aspect of society, which had been so rudely broken in upon for four or five years, by the interference of the English and their servants in the internal trade and concerns of the country, was once more restored. No man but Clive could have achieved such changes; and he derived his power to effect them from his own energetic character, and from the glory which his former exploits had diffused around him.

He held that the interest of England was best consulted by stopping the career of conquest, and by confining ourselves to Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa; rich, compact, and defensible provinces, that, by good management, could be governed at little expense, and leave a large surplus revenue.

His policy in regard to the native princes he himself explains. He never came into contact with the Mahrattas, the grand disturbers of India, but was stongly urged by the Emperor Shah Aulum to enter into an alliance with them, and accompany him to Delhi. This, we have seen, he obstinately declined. "As I proceed up the country," says he in a letter * to Mr. Palk, "if I find the Mahrattas discontented and disposed to be troublesome, I shall endeavour to form an alliance with the Jauts, Rohillas, and Suja Dowla, to keep the country on this side Delhi in tranquillity. This alliance is most earnestly wished for by the three above-mentioned powers, and will, if any thing can, intimidate the Mahrattas from committing ravages and disturbances in Hindostan; for certain it is, if we should all unite and attack their country they could not stand one minute before us." He had also speculated on the possibility, if necessary, of setting up the Rajah of Nagpore (whose vakeels had waited on him at Calcutta to ask an alliance) in opposition to the Peshwa, with whom that Prince was then on bad terms, and in that way trusted to secure domestic peace by dividing the force of his enemy.† He did not, however, provoke hostilities; and his great military

* 23rd April, 1766.

† Letter to Mr. Palk, 8th September, 1766.

reputation probably preserved him safe from the attacks of these freebooters, as well as from all other foreign annoyance.

In his intercourse with the chiefs of the different European factories in Bengal, French, Dutch, and Danish, though he never yielded the minutest portion of the rights of his employers, he seems, from his correspondence, to have lived on the most friendly and courteous terms with them all, and to have conciliated them by his fairness and urbanity. But never did he allow any consideration of private interest to interfere with his public duty. We have already seen that, while nearly the whole of his large fortune was in the hands of the Dutch, he attacked and destroyed an armament of that nation, at a moment when he might, without reproach from his Government, have abstained from acting, and when, indeed, he hazarded the censure of his employers, and of the British Government, by the bold and decided measure. Another very characteristic instance of a similar nature occurs in his correspondence. M. Vernet, the Dutch chief of Chinsura, had applied to him to procure the release of some boats which had been stopped by the Nabob's officers, for some informality or evasion. "I have the honour," he says*, "to acknowledge the receipt of your

* 11th November, 1766.

letters of the 7th and 9th instant. In consequence of the latter, I have spoken to Mahommed Reza Cawn, who will this day give orders for the release of such of the Dutch boats as are furnished with your dustucks, and contain no greater quantity of goods than are therein specified. But should any of the boats be found laden with merchandise not mentioned in the dustucks, you cannot but confess, from what I have already written you, that it would be highly improper for me to interfere." He immediately adds, "You favoured me, some time ago, with your promise for bills for the amount of two lacs of rupees by your second ship. I am now to request bills for one other lac, if you can conveniently grant them." With him the separation between his public duty and private interest was always complete: he never permitted the latter for a moment to influence his conduct in the other.

The same urbanity and consideration which he showed to foreign Europeans, secured to him the attachment and affection of most of the natives of rank with whom he had occasion to treat. He behaved to them uniformly with the deference and respect that were considered as their due, by the usages of the country. In writing to a friend concerning an increase which had been made to the revenues of Bengal, we

have seen* that he urged the necessity of stopping, that we might not trench on the fund necessary for the support of the higher class of native families. He was anxious that the regular gradation of ranks should be preserved as it then was, that it should be exposed to no sudden disruption. It would have been well if such beneficent and politic maxims had always been acted upon in future years.

In his choice of men for public situations, he was guided by a regard to their talents, and their capacity of being useful. Though no man was more ready to attend to the recommendation of his friends, such recommendation with him held but the second place, and was listened to only in affairs of detail. All the higher offices, and such as required superior abilities, he, like every other man who has a mind made for command, filled from considerations of merit only. Even some men whom he personally disliked, as for example, Colonel Richard Smith, he constantly employed and encouraged from a sense of their useful qualities.

Among other eminent men whom he patronised, he found Rennell, then a lieutenant of engineers, employed in various surveys, encouraged him to complete the general survey

* Letter to Mr. Palk, 25th April, 1766, already quoted.

and map of Bengal, communicated to him all such previous surveys as were to be found in the public offices, furnished him with a proper establishment, gave him every assistance in his power, and finally, young as he was, bestowed on him the office of surveyor-general, which seems to have been created for him. Clive's mode of treating officers in whom he could repose confidence, and his means of securing the speedy and effectual execution of the orders he gave, are illustrated by one of his letters* to Rennell. He had ordered a general map of the provinces to be completed. "If you have occasion for any assistants, name them, and I will order them to attend you."

He also directed an accurate survey to be made of every mouth of the Ganges, every channel, and every creek, ascertaining at the same time the soundings of each; a survey which, in his instructions, he justly remarks, was likely to afford many new and advantageous directions for our navigation.† Till then, our acquaintance with the mouths of the Ganges was very imperfect.

Among those who were introduced into the service by his interest, may be mentioned Mr. Gladwin, one of the first of the English in Ben-

* 4th October, 1765.

† Letter to Captain Keble, Master Attendant, 28th April, 1766.

gal, who communicated to the public his acquirements in the eastern languages. He had gone out as a volunteer, in which situation he attracted the notice of Clive, who procured for him admission into the civil service. Clive's conduct, in this instance, is very characteristic of his friendly and energetic temper. Mr. Strachey writes Mr. Gladwin*, — "His Lordship directs me to assure you, that if the recommendations he gave you, some time ago, should not procure you an appointment in the Company's service, he will further exert his interest in your behalf, nor desist till the point be attained."

Though a steady friend, he was not blind to the faults of those whom he patronised; and his correspondence contains many letters, in which he freely gives his opinions on their conduct, and his candid advice. An extract from a letter to Mr. Middleton† may be given as an example. "I have received your letter of the 19th of September," says he, "in which you express your concern at the censure passed upon you by the board, and imagine you may have done something to forfeit my friendship.

"To reason in this way, is to know but little of the duty of a governor in a public station.

* 26th April, 1766.

† Letter to Samuel Middleton, Esq., 4th October, 1766.

If the board were unanimous, which they really were, in thinking you and the other gentlemen had been wanting in diligence and attention to the Company's business, was it in my power to change or alter their sentiments? Or could I attempt such a thing consistently with my duty, or the principles upon which I have hitherto acted? The real truth of the matter is, that the relaxation of government for some years past, has introduced so much luxury, extravagance, independency, and indolence into Bengal, that every effort upon our part to reclaim this settlement is looked upon as a hardship, or an act of injustice; although it be absolutely necessary for the salvation of the whole." After some observations on the wrongheaded opposition which had been made by some of the younger servants, and the danger they thereby incurred, he adds: —

"To set aside the Governor, and speak as a friend, I entertain no doubt of the integrity of your intentions, and of your zeal for the service; but you are naturally of an indolent, good-natured, and hospitable disposition, which in private life may make you beloved by all that know you; yet, in a public station, these qualities may subject you to the greatest inconveniences. You become responsible, not only to the public for your want of attention, but for the want of at-

tention of those acting under you, who will perpetually trespass on your good nature. The indulgence shown by you to the young gentlemen of the factory, which I myself was an eye-witness to, must have this consequence,—of their becoming very familiar, which in your present station they ought not to be, of being very supine and very neglectful of the Company's business, in which your own reputation is more immedately concerned. And I wish the mischief may only end here. After having led so luxurious, extravagant, and independent a life, there will be much to fear for themselves after your departure.

"The open manner in which you have expressed your sentiments and grievances, gives me a right to send you mine in return, which I do assure you proceeds from real friendship and regard for the interests of those who are acting under you. Perhaps they may not be looked upon in that light by said young men. If not, I wish future experience may not convince them to the contrary."

Such friendly remonstrances, from a man like Lord Clive, from one who had a right to command, should have had their effect; and, at all events, are creditable alike to his heart and understanding.

In the same spirit, and from a firm persuasion

of the noxious effects of expensive habits in young men in the lower branches of the service, we find him refusing dustucks for the conveyance of a chariot and barouche to gentlemen who were only writers, as being quite unjustifiable.

Many of the imprudent and ill-advised officers who had been engaged in the mutinous proceedings, applied to him to be reinstated. This he peremptorily refused, as injurious to the public service: but, from his private letters we find that, in numerous instances, he advanced sums from his private purse, to enable them to subsist after their dismissal, and to convey them to their native country.

On the 16th of January, 1767, Lord Clive was well enough to attend, for the last time, a meeting of the Select Committee. On this occasion he laid before them a letter, in which, after mentioning that he had no prospect of recovering health, or even of preserving life, but by an immediate embarkation for his native country, and that this necessity would be most painful to him, did he not leave the country in peace and in a flourishing state, and in the hands of an upright and able government, he proceeds to exercise his authority for continuing the Select Committee, filled up the vacancies in its members, and laid down regulations for its guidance. He advises them not to be anxious to increase

the revenues, especially where it could only be effected by oppressing the landholders and tenants, for that so long as the country remained in peace, the collections would exceed the demands. He points out some difficulties likely to result from the state of the currency, and strongly recommends that all Company's servants and free traders should be recalled from the interior; as, until that was done the natives could hardly be said to be masters of their own poperty: that the orders for the abolition of ther salt trade being express, must be punctually obeyed.* "But, as I am of opinion," he continues, "that the trade upon its present footing is rather beneficial than injurious to the inhabitants of the country, and that a continuation of this indulgence, or some equivalent, is become absolutely necessary, and would be an honourable incitement to diligence and zeal in the Company's service, I flatter myself the Court of Directors will be induced to settle some plan that will prove agreeable to your wishes."

He evinced great apprehension (says Sir John

* Lord Clive having, on this occasion, resigned the shares in the salt trade, to which by the scheme the governor was entitled, a commission of $1\frac{1}{8}$ per cent. on the revenues was assigned as an equivalent, to commence 1st September, 1766, and to end 1st September, 1767, the term of the salt society's privilege.

Malcolm*, speaking of Lord Clive's farewell letter,) of the danger to which the empire would be exposed by the revival of that spirit of corruption and insubordination which he had, with so much difficulty, subdued. "It has been too much the custom," he observes, "in this government to make orders and regulations, and thence to suppose the business done. To what end and purpose are they made, if they be not promulgated and enforced? No regulation can be carried into execution, no order obeyed, if you do not make rigorous examples of the disobedient. Upon this point I rest the welfare of the Company in Bengal. The servants are now brought to a proper sense of their duty. If you slacken the reins of government affairs will soon revert to their former channel; anarchy and corruption will again prevail, and, elate with a new victory, be too headstrong for any future efforts of government. Recall to your memories the many attempts that have been made in the civil and military departments to overcome our authority, and to set up a kind of independency against the Court of Directors. Reflect also on the resolute measures we have pursued, and their wholesome effects. Disobedience to legal power is the first step of sedition; and palliative measures effect

* Malcolm's Political India, vol. ii. p. 32.

no cure. Every tender compliance, every condescension on your parts, will only encourage more flagrant attacks, and will daily increase in strength, and be at last in vain resisted. Much of our time has been employed in correcting abuses. The important work has been prosecuted with zeal, diligence, and disinterestedness; and we have had the happiness to see our labours crowned with success. I leave the country in peace. I leave the civil and military departments under discipline and subordination: it is incumbent upon you to keep them so. You have power, you have abilities, you have integrity; let it not be said that you are deficient in resolution. I repeat that you must not fail to exact the most implicit obedience to your orders. Dismiss or suspend from the service any man who shall dare to dispute your authority. If you deviate from the principles upon which you have hitherto acted, and upon which you are conscious you ought to proceed; or if you do not make a proper use of that power with which you are invested, I shall hold myself acquitted, as I do now protest against the consequences."

"Such," continues Sir John, "was the parting advice which Lord Clive gave to his former colleagues: but the task of reform which he had commenced could have been completed by his own commanding talents alone, aided by the

impression of his high personal character. It was far too great for the strength of those on whom it devolved."

On the 23d of January he wrote an additional letter to the Select Committee. It was for the purpose of recommending a measure which he had omitted to mention in his letter of the 16th, but which he considered as essentially necessary to the interest and honour of the Company. "The people of this country," says he, "have little or no idea of a divided power; they imagine all authority is vested in one man. The Governor of Bengal should always be looked upon by them in this light, as far as is consistent with the honour of the Committee and Council. In every vacant season, therefore, I think it expedient that he take a tour up the country, in the quality of a supervisor-general. Frauds and oppressions of every sort being by this means laid open to his view, will, in a great measure, be prevented, and the natives preserve a just opinion of the importance and dignity of our president, upon whose character and conduct much of the prosperity of the Company's affairs in Bengal must ever depend."

Lord Clive finally embarked for England in the Britannia, in the end of January, 1767. In the East all his endeavours had been crowned with brilliant success. His operations, from the

moment he appeared on that theatre till he quitted it, formed a great era in the history of England, of India, and of the world. The rapidity and ease with which the richest provinces in India were subjugated, threw a new light on the nature of the intercourse between Europe and Asia. The veil which Bussy had in part lifted up, he removed. Men, who till now had appeared in the humble garb of merchants and suitors, henceforward assumed the reins of government, and took their place in the direction of nations and of states where they had lately been strangers. The power of the East was once more, as in the days of Alexander, brought into collision with that of the West, and once more quailed before it. The grand secret of oriental splendour and weakness was confirmed; and Clive had sufficient greatness of mind to forego the tempting occasion of being the conqueror of the Mogul empire, and to content himself with a more moderate and less brilliant, but to his country, infinitely more useful triumph. He had the rare, and, in a successful soldier and conqueror, almost unparalleled magnanimity, to place his ambition under the guidance of his judgment and his duty.

## CHAP. XVII.

Lord Clive landed at Portsmouth on the 14th of July, 1767, and reached London on the following day. Though the sea-voyage probably preserved his life, it still left his constitution very much shattered; and, on his arrival in London, his physicians immediately recommended that he should repair to Bath, for the purpose of drinking the waters. He remained in town, therefore, only a few days to be presented to their Majesties, to whom he had brought letters and presents from the Nabob of Arcot; and, in the first days of August, he set out for Bath, taking in his way Wotton, the seat of his friend Mr. George Grenville. His disorder was a severe bilious complaint, attended with spasms, loss of appetite, and indigestion; a continuation or consequence of that derangement of the liver from which he had already suffered so much in Bengal.

On his arrival, he was warmly welcomed, not only by his family and numerous private friends, but by the men most distinguished for rank and talent in England, and by the Court of Directors, who owed him so much. While conducting

the affairs of his country with such distinguished honour and success in India, he had not been forgotten in Europe, where his name occupied a high rank among those of the illustrious men, who had raised the fame of England to so high an eminence at that glorious period. His statue, with those of Admiral Sir George Pocock, and of General Lawrence, had been placed in the India House.* The first part of Orme's "History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan," had appeared in 1763, and had spread the renown of the hero of the story wherever the English language is read. When Clive, during his second government, had enlarged so much his own fame, and the fame and power of his country, he felt a natural desire that the elegant historian should continue his work, and commemorate these great events; and accordingly he furnished him with all the materials that he possessed for aiding his progress. "What think you," says he, with a just pride, in a letter to Orme, "of closing the third volume of your history with an account of the King (of Delhi's) being at last placed in a situ-

* These statues were executed by Scheemaker, and placed, Pocock's in the centre, over the Chairman's seat, Clive's on the right hand, in an advanced and speaking attitude, and Lawrence's on the left. The statues are larger than life, and in the Roman costume.

ation of affluence and grandeur, the Vizier Sujah-u-Dowlah being obliged to sue for peace, which was granted upon very honourable terms, and the Company being in possession of the revenues of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, amounting to 4,000,000*l.* sterling per annum, and the country in a state of perfect tranquillity." * The subject was a fine one, every way worthy of the historian's talents; and the proposed enlargement would have given a suitable close and unity to his former labours. But Orme did not delight in bold and rapid sketches; and the perhaps excessive detail in which he indulged in his most interesting historical work, prevented him from at all entering on the history of these memorable transactions; so that, at the close of his third volume, he had not advanced beyond the year 1760, the time when Clive left the country after his first government. At the same time, it is not to be supposed that Clive escaped a large share of that envy, and of the consequent abuse, that generally attend the triumph of a fortunate commander. The many enemies whom he had made, filled the public papers, to a more than ordinary degree, with acrimonious attacks; and scattered pamphlets, full of misstatements and personalities, which affected his sensitive mind more than they deserved.

Clive's letter to Orme, 29th September, 1765.

Though Lord Clive now filled so large a space in the eyes of his countrymen and of foreign nations, he was yet only in his forty-second year; an age at which he might still have looked forward to a long career of public service and of glory. It is much to be regretted that, circumstanced as he was, in possession of an ample fortune, with his talents in their fullest vigour, and with one of the first reputations of the age, he did not confine himself to the high ground on which he stood, and shun being once more forced into the dark, and unsatisfactory circle of Leadenhall Street politics. He was, however, unfortunately pressed by too many immediate interests, both of his own and of his friends, to suffer him to adopt a course which would have contributed so much to his future peace. He had spent his whole life in Indian affairs, which naturally, in his estimation, had a peculiar importance; and perhaps his active mind could not at once break off the ties which had so long attached him to the Company and its concerns.

He found, on his return, the affairs of the East India Company considerably more complicated than he had left them. The two parties of Mr. Rous and Mr. Sulivan still divided the Directors; but the accounts of the great accession of wealth acquired for the Company in Bengal had excited the cupidity of the British

Government, which, impoverished by the expenses of a war carried on in every quarter of the globe, eagerly looked for a partial relief to the treasures that were to flow into England from her Eastern dominions. The same expectation naturally roused the Proprietors of India Stock, who insisted on enjoying the benefit of the happy change in the most obvious way, by an increase of their dividend. To embroil still more these adverse interests, the servants of the Company, who had resigned or been dismissed, in consequence of their malversation in office, returned to England, breathing revenge against the man whose honest vigour had stopped them in their career; and having employed, in the purchase of Company's stock, a part of the great wealth which they had accumulated, were able, by throwing their interest into the scale, to influence the proceedings of the Court of Proprietors, and, therefore, ultimately that of the Directors.

Three years before, Lord Clive had left England, immediately after gaining a victory over Mr. Sulivan and his party. But as that gentleman had long managed the Company's affairs, was widely connected, and still retained many friends, the new Directors had by no means an easy part to act. For the first year, Mr. Sulivan's interest continued to be so strong among the

Directors, that Mr. Rous, the new Chairman, sometimes found it difficult even to muster a sufficient number to sign his ordinary letters. In the election of 1765, Mr. Boulton was chosen Chairman; and the stability of the party in office seeming to increase, considerable defection, as is usual in such cases, took place from the ranks of their opponents. They also carried the election in the following year (1766) completely, when Mr. Dudley was elected Chairman. Still, however, the party of Sulivan continued to be strong; and when Lord Chatham's ministry was formed, in July, 1766, Sulivan was understood to be favoured by them, through the interest of Lord Shelburne, who was his friend.

We have seen the alarming aspect of the Company's affairs, when Clive was induced* to forego the comforts of home, and once more to visit Bengal, for the purpose of retrieving them. He had not been long absent when the drooping hopes of the Proprietors having revived, they demanded an increase of the dividend. Clive, ever sanguine, was of opinion that they ought to have been indulged; but the difficulties were considerable. "Believe the word of a Director," says Mr. Scrafton, writing† to him, before the news of his great success had reached England; "Believe the word of a Director, that the Com-

1764. † 9th December, 1765.

pany must have many lacs, before they can increase their dividend. Consider, my Lord, what a vast sum of their capital has been locked up without interest in Mahommed Ali's debt, the vast fortifications, the fatal Manilla expedition, and the sum locked up in the support of French prisoners, for which no instalments are yet settled, all form prodigious deductions, which a year's revenue of the whole province of Bengal will barely replace; not to mention the dreadful breach in the Company's capital before the battle of Plassey." And Mr. Dudley, at a still later period, acknowledges* that the Company had contracted several hundred thousand pounds of debt at home during the war, for which demands were urgent.

But when the news reached England of the re-establishment of the Company's affairs, and of the great advantages that had been gained for them by the various treaties concluded by Clive, the joy of the Proprietors was extreme; the price of stock rose, and there was a general and more clamorous demand for an increase of dividend. During the war in India, it had been reduced from 8 to 6 per cent. The more prosperous state of affairs seemed now to justify a considerable increase.

* Letter to Lord Clive, 17th May, 1766.

On this point, unfortunately, the Directors and Proprietors differed. While the Directors, as managers of the general stock, and intimately acquainted with the difficulties amidst which they were placed, looked to the clearing off of their burdens, and, the better to effect this object, had, not very wisely, attempted to conceal the expected extent of the new revenues, the Proprietors, who, by various channels, had gained information, probably exaggerated, of the recent addition to the Company's means, clamoured for an instant rise of dividend. The Directors saw that the change which had taken place in the Company's affairs in Bengal, however favourable, could not at once operate in Europe. The immediate demands on the Company were great, while a considerable period of time was requisite to allow the capital sent from Bengal to China, and elsewhere to be invested in goods, returned to England, sold, and the proceeds realised. The Company might be in great affluence abroad, and bankrupt at home. Demands to the amount of 2,600,000*l.* became payable between Michaelmas and Midsummer (1766), while only 2,000,000*l.* were available to discharge them. It was therefore necessary to borrow in order to pay even the ordinary dividends.

The Court of Directors did not show much ability in extricating themselves from the di-

lemma in which they were placed. Had they fully weighed the difficulties of their situation, and the necessity there was, even for the sake of the prosperous management of the Company's funds, and the payment of its lawful creditors, that the Court of Proprietors should be conciliated and unanimity preserved, they would themselves, without concealing their difficulties, have proposed some moderate increase of the annual dividend, and have held out the prospect of a farther rise at some future and not very distant period. Instead of acting on some such plan of politic conciliation, they shunned meeting the Proprietors, and exerted every endeavour to continue the low dividend then payable, so very disproportioned to the price to which stock had now risen. Their situation was delicate, but their conduct was injudicious, as they were liable to be overruled by the Court of Proprietors in any contest with whom they must inevitably fail.

A party of considerable strength had lately sprung up in the Court of Proprietors. We have seen that when, on Lord Clive's arrival in Bengal, an investigation had been commenced into the transactions that attended the death of Meer Jaffier and the accession of Nujm-u-Dowla, and particularly as to the large sums of money paid to the members of Council on that oc-

casion. Mr. John Johnstone, the most active agent in these proceedings, had resigned the service, and so placed himself, for the time, beyond the reach of the Company; and that some other members of the Council had afterwards been dismissed. They, with many of lower rank in the civil and military services who had resigned or been discharged, in consequence of Lord Clive's inquiries and reforms, had, as already mentioned, purchased a large amount of India stock, the better to enable them to wreak their revenge on the man who had obstructed their plans of wealth.

The Court of Directors, desirous of punishing the infraction of their orders, and of supporting Lord Clive in his exertions to fulfil their instructions, directed a case to be laid before the Attorney and Solicitor-General, and the Company's law-officers, who gave an unanimous opinion, that the orders of the Company for the execution of the covenants against accepting presents, having been received and laid before the board, prior to the death of Meer Jaffier, the delay in the execution, for purposes the object of which was so evident, could form no justification; that the covenants were binding in equity, and that suits ought to be brought for restitution of the pretended presents. In consequence of this opinion, bills were filed at the instance of the East India

Company against Mr. Johnstone, and the other members of Council in England; and orders were sent to India to adopt corresponding measures against such as were still in that country.

Mr. Johnstone, who was not only a man of family, but of uncommon resolution and considerable talent, was strongly supported by several large proprietors of stock. When the time approached that his answers were to be given in, his brother, Mr. William Johnstone, afterwards Sir William Pulteney, waited on the Chairman, Mr. Dudley, and delivered a copy of a motion intended to be made at the General Court to be held the next day, recommending to the Court of Directors to confirm the presents received by the Company's servants in Bengal, before the 9th of May, 1765, when the covenants were presented to them to be signed, and to countermand all prosecutions against them. The Chairman was at the same time informed, that, if this motion was rejected, the conduct of Lord Clive should be called in question. Mr. Dudley replied, that they were welcome to exhibit any charge against Lord Clive, but that the prosecutions could not be withdrawn. Next day, however, the opposition, probably finding that they had not strength enough to carry their motion, did not bring it forward; and Mr. Pulteney himself seconded a motion for adjournment.

But the determined resistance of the Directors to any increase of dividend gave their enemies great advantages over them in the Court of Proprietors. The Directors had themselves caused a motion for an increase of 2 per cent. to be brought forward in June, 1766, when they succeeded in getting it negatived; and thus, in consequence of particular rules, which regulated the Court's proceedings, gained some time. But this delay did not check the determination of the party in opposition, which daily gained strength. Lord Holland, and several other great proprietors, joined it, and Mr. Johnstone and his friends threw all their weight into the scale. Only two days before the Quarterly Court, in September*, the party split 125,000*l.* stock into shares, and, by their exertions, succeeded in carrying the dividend to 10 per cent., in opposition to the expressed wish and advice of the Court of Directors. But a consequence of this difference of opinion between the Courts was, that this declared increase of dividend had no influence in raising the price of their stock.

At this period, party animosity ran very high, and produced its usual effects of mutual abuse and recrimination. The opposition started a paper, called the India Examiner, which the Directors answered in the India Observer.

* 26th September, 1766.

Although it was on occasion of the vote for this increase of dividend that the Government began to intermeddle in the affairs of the Company, it may be most convenient, before attending to the proceedings of the Ministry, to conclude the narrative of the contest of the Directors with the Court of Proprietors. *

Mr. Johnstone and his friends had trusted to be relieved from the prosecutions instituted against them, by exerting their influence to effect a change of Directors. In April, 1767, however, their efforts for that purpose again failed: the elections were still favourable to the old Directors, and Mr. Rous was again chosen Chairman. Lord Clive was then on his passage home. Mr. Johnstone's party, seeing that nothing was to be looked for from the Directors, adopted the resolution of attempting to work on the Proprietors, who were still, in general, discontented on the subject of the dividends. At the General Court, therefore, held on the 6th of May following, Mr. Pulteney moved, that the dividend should be raised to 12½ per cent.; a proposition which met with very general concurrence. Mr. Pulteney having thus secured the good-will of the Proprietors, Mr. Franks then moved to dismiss the prosecutions which had been instituted against Mr. Johnstone and other

* 6th May, 1767.

persons, for their alleged unwarrantable receipt of money in Bengal. The Chairman in vain proposed that the opinion of the lawyers should be read: the Court, displeased with the Directors, and elated with the measure they had carried against them, with the assistance of Mr. Johnstone and his friends, refused to hear it. Seeing them so determined, and so strong, no opposition was attempted by the Directors, nor even a ballot demanded. The motion of indemnity was carried without farther examination; a great victory to the accused members of Council, and a severe blow on the authority of the Court of Directors and of the Indian governments. It declared indemnity abroad to all who at home had powerful friends connected with the India House; an intimation that was not long disregarded.*

The Ministry, in the meanwhile, had begun to take a share in the proceedings of the Company, which for a long time before had not been usual. The reported advantages of the trade, and the great fortunes suddenly amassed and brought home, had excited in the country no small envy, and some desire to share in these advantages; while the repeated revolutions in India, the circumstances attending them, with

* The preceding narrative is chiefly extracted from notes of Sir Henry Strachey on the subject.

the rapacity and extortions which had distinguished the progress of the inland trade, had, when known, produced general murmurs throughout the nation. When the news arrived of the successful negotiations of Lord Clive, and of the immense territorial advantages said to be acquired for the Company, the question was raised, to whom belonged these dominions, the government of which was apparently so little suited to the system of a trading company; and the financial difficulties which the Ministers so strongly felt, led them to consider in what way the nation could be admitted to share in them. This was particularly observable after the formation of Lord Chatham's administration.*

It has been already mentioned, that Lord Clive shared in that excessive admiration of Mr. Pitt, which, during his first administration, and for some years after, may be said to have been felt by the whole people of England. Lord Clive, in his own politics, had, as we have seen, most attached himself to the Right Hon. George Grenville, a man of great knowledge of business, and of much talent and worth, the leader of one great portion of the Whig interest; but who, at this period, was on indifferent terms with his illustrious though overbearing friend. On the great question of the right to territorial acqui-

* 30th July, 1766.

sitions, Mr. Pitt was disposed to consider them as under the control of the state; but he was not insensible to the difficulties, legal and political, which the question involved, from the nature of the territories themselves, situated in the dominions of an ancient and independent empire; from the influence which such acquisitions, especially from the patronage they afforded, must have on the British constitution, and the minor difficulties of detail attending any change of local management. We have seen that Lord Clive was strongly persuaded of the paramount rights of the state, and had communicated his opinion to Mr. Pitt. Mr. Walsh, who took an active share in the management of his affairs in England, was anxious to have the approbation, or, at least, the opinion of the great commoner on recent events in India. He, in consequence, had occasional interviews with him, the circumstances of which he communicated in his letters to his friend; and though Mr. Pitt, who always entertained the highest opinion of Lord Clive's merits, appears to have cautiously avoided committing himself by any decided opinion, yet, as the letters relate to persons on every account so remarkable, no apology seems necessary for introducing them.

The first of these notices occurs in a letter of Mr. Walsh, written after the news had arrived

of Lord Clive's negotiation with the Vizier, and of the subsequent peace, and its advantages to the Company, especially in the possession of the dewannee, which really made them rulers of Bengal. "I am very sorry," says Mr. Walsh, "you did not write a few lines to Mr. Pitt, to conciliate him to your negotiations: he has left us for Pynsent, where he is doing great things. I spoke a few words to him, just as he left the House of Commons, telling him you had, in great measure, carried into execution what I had once the honour of laying before him; to which he answered, that he had heard of the great things you had done; that you had acquired great honour; but that they were too vast: it was some time he had been dissatisfied with our proceedings there: however, he was very glad to hear that Lord Clive was well, and that he had not gone up to Delhi. This was all that passed between us, whilst he was getting on his great coat."—"I should be very sorry," he continues, "to have been adverse to you or your regulations, therefore mention this that due attention may be paid to him. One word from him would go far in making or unmaking the Company; and it is the uncertainty of the public, how far the Company may be supported by the Government, that makes their stock so low, notwithstanding the late events.

The renewal of their charter is a serious object; the effecting it may possibly be reserved for you." It gives a grand idea of Mr. Pitt's reputation, and of his influence on the public mind, to consider, that, when this interview took place, he was merely a private member of Parliament, holding no office.

In the interval between this letter of May, and the following of November, Mr. Pitt had come into office with Lord Camden, Lord Shelburne, the Earl of Northington, and Charles Townsend, and had been raised to the peerage. There was some reason to think that the new Ministry were disposed to take part with that portion of the Court of Directors that was hostile to Lord Clive. Lord Shelburne in particular, who was supposed to have much influence with the Premier, had always favoured Sulivan. "Soon after the new administration was formed," says Mr. Walsh *, "the Chairman and Deputy Chairman were sent for to the Cabinet Council, and were acquainted that, as the affairs of the India Company were likely to be taken into consideration by Parliament, it would be proper for them to be prepared. An intimation of the kind could not fail to alarm, and affect the stock greatly.

"The Quarterly Court being over, I made an

* Letter, 22d November, 1766.

excursion to Bath, where Lord Chatham, Lord Camden, and Lord Northington were assembled. My private motive for this journey was to discover their disposition towards the Company; and, by means of my intimacy with Lord Camden, to endeavour to put you on a good footing with Lord Chatham, who, there was some reason to apprehend, was not the best disposed either towards you, the present direction, or the Company. I recollected Lord Chatham's discourse to me about your acquisitions being too vast; and saw Shelburne, Barré, and the enemies of the present direction in the highest employs. Lord Camden immediately removed any apprehensions as to any thing hostile being intended against the Company. I told him that I was ignorant whether the Directors had given the Administration full information concerning the affairs of Bengal: but, whatever their conduct might have been in that respect, I, as acting for Lord Clive, should use no kind of reserve with the Administration; that Lord Clive, though a zealous servant of the Company, ever considered his duty to his country to be the first and greatest obligation upon him; that he had formerly submitted to Lord Chatham's consideration, whether the Bengal acquisitions were an object for the state or the Company; and that, though the Company had in a manner been left

to pursue their own measures in that respect, yet it was reasonable that, in such great prosperity as theirs, they should contribute liberally to the exigencies of the state; that your friends would readily concur in such a measure, and that I wished for an opportunity of assuring Lord Chatham of this; but as I knew him, particularly in his present ill state of health, to be inaccessible, I requested his Lordship to report it to him. He advised my writing a note to see Lord Chatham, which I accordingly did, and was admitted, though it was then a favour, as I understood, he had only granted to Lord Camden.

"I should have mentioned that, before I left town, I waited on General Conway *; made him the same offer of information; gave him a state of the revenues, and pointed out to him some of the means by which the commerce of the Company might be greatly advanced. He appeared quite unacquainted with these affairs, but very desirous to be informed.

"It was the 11th of last month that I saw Lord Chatham. I told him the occasion of my visit in almost the same words I had used to Lord Camden; in answer to which, after complimenting me on the purity, as he styled it, of my intentions, and of the liberal way in which I

* Also a member of the Administration.

had considered this matter, he told me that all *matters of fact* relating to India would be very acceptable to him, though he did not wish to receive *propositions* on that head, as the affair was of too extensive and too difficult a nature for Ministers to determine; that they could not undertake to decide between the State and the Company, what was precisely proper for each; that the consideration must of necessity come into Parliament; that by the means of so many gentlemen coming from different parts of the kingdom, and turning the subject different ways in their minds, many new lights might be gathered; that the Crown had nothing to do in the affair, and that its ministers could only interfere in preventing unreasonableness and oppressions on one side or the other; and that the Company, in all cases, must subsist. On my giving him the state of the revenues, he seemed much surprised at the smallness of the amount, saying that Holwell and common report had made it much larger. He spoke very handsomely of you; said that he heard with concern of the virulent publications against you; that it was incumbent on the Company to support you strongly, and likewise to reward you. I mentioned how greatly the Company's commerce might be extended with the assistance of Government; hinted the necessity there was of excluding foreigners from

being stockholders and sharing in our benefits; and concluded with observing that every thing I had heard from him gave me the highest satisfaction, except the impracticability that he intimated of any arrangement between the Administration and the Directors before the meeting of Parliament.

"This is the substance of my conversation with this great man, who is certainly not only the most vigorous, but the most comprehensive and judicious, minister this kingdom ever had. I hope, in consequence of what I before wrote you, that you have taken some steps to conciliate and attach him. He has a greatness in himself, which makes him feel and assert the great actions of others.

"I put your public letters into the hands of Lord Camden, who, doubtless, showed them to Lord Chatham. Both one and the other, I am certain, are well satisfied with the confidence. Mr. Grenville has had all the papers laid before him, and part of them, particularly those relative to the conduct of the servants, have been communicated to others."

From these letters, it is evident that Lord Chatham had been yet able to form no plan on the vast subject of Indian affairs; that he was disposed to let matters take their course for some time longer through the intervention of

the Company, and that the recent extension of their dominions probably rather embarassed him; that he was alive, as he had always been, to Lord Clive's splendid merits, and an advocate for the rewards the gratitude of the country ought to bestow. At the same time he was cautiously guarded not to commit himself by any opinions, but rather disposed to gain time and watch what the progress of events might produce. It could hardly fail to gratify him to see all parties contending for his favour, and laying the information they possessed, and a tender of their services, at his feet.

Lord Chatham's administration was formed in the last days of July, and it was in September that the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Company were sent for to the Council, and informed that it was likely that the affairs of the Company would be taken into consideration when the Parliament met. The same notice was soon after communicated in writing.

The Directors, thus put upon their guard, looked eagerly to what was to follow. The movement began in the House of Commons, where Mr. Beckford gave notice of a motion for an inquiry into the affairs of the East India Company*; and in the course of his speech, ad-

* 25th November, 1766.

verting to the burdens laid on the landed interest, and to the rich acquisitions of the Company in the East, congratulated his brother landholders that they should no longer be hewers of wood and drawers of water. The very exaggerated statements of the revenues of Bengal, published by Mr. Holwell and others, had induced the public to look to them for at least a partial relief from their burdens. The Ministers, however, cautiously concealed their intentions, if they had any, and proposed nothing. Lord Chatham was constantly confined by the gout, remained chiefly in the country, and showed himself but little; and his colleagues did not venture, in his absence, to propose any important measure. Matters went on languidly. Indeed, the symptoms of disunion very soon became visible in the motley cabinet which had been formed, and was supported chiefly by Lord Chatham's great name.

His opinions on the Indian question were veiled in impenetrable mystery. Committees were, however, appointed to examine into the state of the Company, and votes were passed that copies of their charters, their treaties with native princes, statements of their Indian revenues, and their correspondence with their servants in India, should be laid before the Committees. On a motion for printing these

papers*, the Directors being alarmed, presented a petition showing the dangers and inconveniences likely to result from making public some part of the papers, especially the private correspondence; when, after a warm debate, that part of the order was discharged. Almost every person of eminence who had been in India, or connected with it, was, however, examined on oath before the House of Lords.

These inquiries inevitably led to the important question of the Company's right to their territorial acquisitions, which a strong party insisted must belong to the Crown. "The Crown," says Mr. Dudley†, the Chairman of the Directors, "claims a right to all the Company's acquisitions, possessions, and revenues that have been obtained by conquest, which the Cabinet Council, with Lord Chatham at their head, say is the case with respect to every thing we have got from the King, the Nabobs, or other princes of the country for some years past, both at Bengal and Madras."—"We have been, and still are under the dilemma of studying the wants of the Administration, for they themselves will not open their mouths to utter one syllable. They seem to me to determine in their own minds that the right is in the Crown; and, therefore, if the Com-

* 4th March, 1767.

† Letter to Lord Clive, 4th March, 1767.

pany have a desire to preserve a share in it, they must acknowledge that right, and pay largely for it." In the numerous debates on Indian affairs that took place in the course of the session, Mr. Beckford, Colonel Barré, and Mr. Nugent pressed upon the Company, while Mr. George Grenville and Mr. Charles Yorke strongly supported its rights, and pleaded the injustice of making any demands upon it in consequence of its conquests, as long as the term of its charter was unexpired. The lawyers were, in general, in favour of the Company; but neither the Ministry nor the Directors wished the dry question of law to be decided: neither party were altogether prepared for its consequences; both rather wished for a compromise, as more favourable to their present ease and their future views. Sir Matthew Fetherstonehaugh, a considerable proprietor of India stock, in a letter to Lord Clive*, describes some of these debates. "In a question like this," says he, "about the right of property and the forfeiture of a charter, one would have thought that the opinion of almost all the lawyers in the house might have been attended to; but they were called by Colonel Barré 'a sort of *heavy artillery*, which did very little execution;' for which the Master of the Rolls called him, instead of the *honourable*

* 30th December, 1766.

gentleman, the *valiant* gentleman. Mr. Grenville, on both days, defended the Company's rights with a force that was unanswerable, always declaring that, if the Company wanted the renewal of their term, or any other favour from the public, they should be made to pay for it in the best bargain which could be made for the public; but protesting against extorting money from them by the terror and threats of parliamentary power." — "But the finest piece of oratory was Mr. Burke's (late secretary to Lord Rockingham). After pointing out the ill effects which so violent a measure might have on the public credit; 'but, perhaps,' said he, 'this house is not the place where our reasons can be of any avail. The great person who is to determine on this question, may be a being far above our view; one so immeasurably high, that the greatest abilities (pointing to Mr. Townshend), or the most amiable dispositions that are to be found in this house (pointing to Mr. Conway), may not gain access to him; a being before whom 'thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers' (waving his hand all this time over the treasury bench, which he sat behind), 'all veil their faces with their wings. But though our *arguments* may not reach him, possibly our *prayers* may.' He then apostrophised into a

solemn prayer to the Great Minister above, that rules and governs over all to have mercy upon us, and not to destroy the work of his own hands; to have mercy on the public credit, of which he had made so free and large a use:—'Doom not to perdition that vast public debt, a mass of 70,000,000*l.* of which thou hast employed in rearing a pedestal for thy own statue.' Here Augustus Harvey called him to order to the regret of many." After a long series of debates, the Directors were finally frightened into a temporary compromise, agreeing to pay to the Government 400,000*l.*, by half-yearly payments, for one year; and an act to that effect passed the house*, and soon after received the royal assent.† A similar agreement was renewed the year after.

It was some time before that the vote of the Court of Proprietors raising the dividend to 12½ per cent. had been passed‡; on which occasion a message from the Ministry had been read to the General Court, recommending that no augmentation should take place till their affairs, then under the view of Parliament, were considered. The Court having proceeded nevertheless, a bill was introduced, by which this order was rescinded, and the Company prevented from di-

* 12th June. † 29th June, 1767.
‡ 6th May.

BENGAL SECRETARIAT LIBRARY

viding more than 10 per cent. before the next meeting of Parliament.

While these various proceedings were in progress, a measure was proposed that much more immediately concerned Lord Clive's interests. During the discussions that had recently taken place in Parliament, however much the public mind had been excited and disgusted by the reported behaviour of the Company's servants in Bengal, all parties had concurred in loudly praising his conduct and services. When the news of his distinguished success in restoring the Company's affairs reached England, and when the negotiations between the Directors and the Government had begun, many of his friends considered that the proper time had arrived for proposing that some suitable reward should be conferred upon him for his extraordinary services; and accordingly, to prevent his interests from being injured by any subsequent agreement that might be made in the negotiation then depending, a motion was made at a General Court of Proprietors *, "That it is the opinion of this Court, that the important services rendered to the Company by Lord Clive merit a grateful acknowledgment and return; and that a grant to his Lordship, and his personal representatives, of an additional term in the jaghire of ten years, com-

* 18th March, 1767.

mencing from the determination of his Lordship's present right therein, would be a proper acknowledgment and return for such important services: and that it be recommended to the Court of Directors, that, upon any future propositions being made, either to Parliament, or to His Majesty's Ministers, this resolution of the General Court be humbly represented."

On this motion being made, Mr. George Dempster, who was one of the leaders of the opposition to the Directors, moved an adjournment, which was negatived by 243 to 170. The main question was then put; when a ballot was demanded by Sir George Colebrooke in favour of it, and by Mr. Dempster in opposition; when Sir George Colebrooke's question was carried by 456 to 264.

The Proprietors having now formed themselves into a general court, Mr. Dempster moved to reconsider the question concerning the additional term of ten years proposed to be granted to Lord Clive in his jaghire, and which was to be considered on the 24th of March. This motion, after some opposition, was finally carried.

On the appointed day, a ballot having taken place, the original motion was carried by 361 to 332. The majority of 29 was small; but some misunderstanding had, unluckily, taken place among the friends of Lord Clive.

Mr. Dudley, then Chairman, in writing next day* to Lord Clive, observes, "The question which relates to your Lordship's jaghire might have been carried by a much greater majority, had the question been otherwise stated, and would, at the same time, have answered every purpose intended by it: but Mr. Walsh did not consult any of the Directors in forming it, nor could he be prevailed upon to alter it." Mr. Scrafton, then a Director, was also of opinion that Mr. Walsh, in his zeal to serve Lord Clive's interests, precipitated the question too much, bringing on his motion soon after the news of the acquisitions in Bengal had arrived, without giving time to see the effect of the great things that had been done. Mr. Walsh, on the other hand (perhaps alive to the uncertain operation of public gratitude), eager to accomplish what he had undertaken, and brooking no delay, charges the conduct of Lord Clive's friends, and especially of the Directors, with being hesitating and timid, so as to have thrown a damp upon the matter, and to have rendered doubtful the success of a proposition which would otherwise have received a pretty general concurrence. Lord Clive certainly thought that their conduct was at least lukewarm.

Such was the state of affairs when he arrived

* 25th March, 1767.

in England. Of the singular success of his management of the Company's concerns there was but one opinion; and the last months of his residence in India had added extremely to the reputation which he had previously acquired. It seemed indispensably requisite, therefore, that the Directors should redeem the promises which, at the time of his setting out, and afterwards in their public letters *, they had made to him. About two months after his return a General Court was held, when the grant of the jaghire for ten years additional, which had been recommended at the previous meeting, was conferred on him by an unanimous vote. His irreconcileable enemies were probably led to decline appearing in opposition to the grant, by the certainty that their efforts would be fruitless.

This affair of the jaghire unluckily tended to alienate Lord Clive more than ever from his friends in the Direction. In truth, their aims were quite opposite. It was Clive's interest, when asking the reward of his services, that the revenues, and other acquisitions gained for the Company, should be published to their full extent: the Directors, fighting against a rise of dividend, were anxious to conceal their amount, and to represent them in as moderate a light as

* 23d September, 1767.

possible. The matter was most essentially important to Lord Clive's interests, and he was at no time very patient of contradiction. They had all along endeavoured to prevent the matter from being brought forward. He felt this conduct very sensibly, and did not conceal his resentment. While he used considerable exertions to secure an ascendency in the Court of Proprietors, he silently left the Court of Directors to follow their own opinions. This gave rise to many reports and groundless surmises. Writing, soon after, to Mr. Scrafton, his very sincere friend, who had differed in opinion from Mr. Walsh as to the management of this affair, he says *, "I received both your letters at a time when I was too much indisposed to answer them. Neither am I inclined to answer that last part of them at all which relates to a difference in opinion between two friends, both equally hearty and zealous in every thing that concerns my honour and interest. Let it suffice to say, that I never entertained the least doubt of your regard and friendship for me. You are liable to an error of judgment as well as my friend W.; which has been the case sometimes with both of you. — However, I cannot avoid being much surprised at the behaviour of many of the Directors, who, either from jealousy or misrepre-

Letter, 2d October.

sentation, or some worse cause, have entertained the injurious opinion that I mean to overthrow them, and be a Director myself. The being a Director may be an object to the Directors, but not to Lord Clive. With regard to overthrowing them I have the interest of the Company too much at heart to attempt any thing of that nature, even if they should behave towards me in the manner which I hear some of them have threatened to do. In short, there are a few individuals whom I never looked upon as my friends, or friends of the Company. Such cannot expect any countenance from me. You have often heard me express myself on that subject."

Mr. Scrafton, before receiving this letter, had written to Lord Clive*, then at Walcot; and, after congratulating him on the resolution of the General Court on the subject of the jaghire, and wishing him long life to enjoy the prolonged period, proceeds to mention some reports which had reached the Directors, that he had in conversation expressed a wish that the Court were purged of the Chairman, and of many others of the Directors. Mr. Scrafton continues: "I suppose it a very impertinent misrepresentation of something that may have dropped from your Lordship in an unreserved

* Letter, dated Thursday, apparently 1st October.

conversation, for I would not wish you really to entertain such a design; for, whatever defects they may have, certainly the present Directors have the merit of having very steadily supported your Lordship while abroad, and are entirely disposed to pay the utmost attention to your advice at home." After pointing out the great evils that would arise from a change of system, the certain consequence of a change of Directors, he continues: "If your Lordship conceives any resentment on the conduct of the Directors respecting the jaghire, you will act from misrepresentation. One or two were cold on the subject, by believing themselves the objects of your resentment, in consequence of Wh—'s story; but the general sense was, 'We cannot, as Directors, recommend so large a grant: the fate the question met with before proves that many thought it too much; but we will give our votes for it.' To conclude, my Lord, I really think it for your own honour, and for the interest of the Company, to support the present set."

This attempt at a justification of the Directors roused Lord Clive, in spite of the state of severe suffering under which he then laboured. "I received your letter," says he in answer*, "and return you many thanks for your congratulations

* Letter, dated Walcot, 6th October, 1767.

about the jaghire. However, you will scarce believe me when I tell you that I was, before it was confirmed, and am at this time, very indifferent about it. My wish was to have it brought to a conclusion at any rate; for I could not avoid observing all parties at work to suspend coming to a conclusion; and many were at greater pains, from rank infernal jealousy and envy, to conceal and lessen my services, in order to lessen my influence: but, I thank God, I am now an independent man, what I was determined to be at all events.

"I cannot but take notice of one paragraph of your letter; *that the Directors thought the grant too large, and therefore would not recommend it:* I am therefore the more obliged to the Proprietors, who were all of a different way of thinking.

"I am obliged to you for your advice about my conduct towards the Directors, because I am persuaded you mean me well; but know, Scrafton, I have a judgment of my own, which has seldom failed me, in cases of much greater consequence than what you recommend. As to the support which, you say, was given to my government, when abroad, by the Directors, they could not have done otherwise, without suffering in their reputation, and perhaps quitting the Direction. In return, let me ask, whose interest

contributed to make them Directors, and keep them so? My conduct wanted no support, it supported itself, because it was disinterested, and tended to nothing but the public good. From the beginning it put all mankind at defiance, as it does at this hour; and had the Court of Directors thought fit to make my conduct more public than they have done, all impartial and disinterested men must have done me justice. However, that remains for myself to make known, when convenient and proper.

"After having said thus much, I must tell you (though by your writing you seem to give credit to the report), that what Whately is said to have told Wedderburn is absolutely false, as is every thing else said to have been communicated by Mr. Grenville to Mr. Wedderburn; and I can attribute these mean suspicions of the Directors to nothing but their envy and jealousy. However, as I have often said before, and say now, there is nothing the Directors can do shall make me lose sight of the Company's true interest. Upon principle, I would always stand by the East India Company: I am now farther bound by the ties of gratitude. This is the ground upon which I now stand, and upon which I will risk my reputation. No little, partial considerations shall ever bias me."

For three years previous to this time, Lord

Clive's mind had been kept painfully on the stretch. He had been compelled, almost singly, to combat a whole settlement, and especially the highest portion of it, in arms against him, eager to thwart and defeat his plans of reform; he had borne the whole weight of the resentment of the officers of the army, whom he subdued by his force of mind and unrivalled reputation; he had paid off a large portion of the Company's debt; had added an immense sum to their revenue, and had supplied them with an unparalleled investment; he had left their possessions in the East, as he believed, rich and flourishing, and in peace, and had returned with ruined health and a broken constitution. In all his trials, and in very painful circumstances, under which most men would have sunk, he had supported himself by the strong consciousness that he was doing his duty, and meriting the applause of his employers and of the world. It is not surprising, that when he thought himself deserted, and believed that he was the object of the jealousy and slight of the very persons whom he had so illustriously served, his disappointment and resentment should be extreme, and that his sensitive and exasperated mind should almost doubt the existence of human gratitude. But this feeling of disappointment never mingled itself with that of his attachment to the Company

itself, as at this very moment, when he was giving vent to the feeling of his wrongs, we find him communicating to the Directors and their committees, with the utmost detail and clearness, his opinions on the whole concerns of the Company, civil, military, and political, in various letters of great length. He did, indeed, feel very acutely some appearances of what he thought want of due respect and consideration on the part of the Directors, in their mode of addressing him; but the whole powers of his mind and experience continued, as much as ever, at the service of the East India Company.

When the business of the jaghire was arranged, Lord Clive set out to visit some of the friends from whom he had been so long separated. In the last days of September, he had, at Birmingham, a very violent attack of bilious cholera, attended with excruciating pain. As soon as he was able he moved to Walcot, and spent the month of October chiefly there and at Styche, in the bosom of his family, and surrounded by his friends. At the latter place, he had another severe attack of the same complaint, attended with very painful symptoms; and it would appear, that he continued freely to indulge in the use of opium, as he had done want in Bengal, to moderate the violence of the he roxysms. His physicians at this time advised

his return to Bath, as affording the best hope of promoting the restoration of his health; and he accordingly removed thither in November.

His views of affairs, both in England and India, with some particulars regarding himself, he communicated about this time in a letter to his friend Mr. Verelst. He had doubts whether that gentleman, upright, amiable, and intelligent as he was, possessed sufficient firmness for the difficult situation in which he was placed; and his advice is directed chiefly to encourage him in a bold and decided conduct, the only course by which it was possible to correct the deep-rooted abuses that prevailed in the service. "As my friendship for you," he writes* "is too warm and sincere to admit of any reserve, I shall make no apology for the freedom with which I intend, at all times, to communicate to you my sentiments upon the proceedings of your government, wherein your honour and reputation are so deeply concerned." After mentioning his own share in securing the confirmation of Mr. Verelst in his office, he proceeds: "But exclusive of the part I take in your success on my account, my regard and affection for you lead me to reflect, that the reputation as well as private satisfaction of your future

* Letter to Harry Verelst, Esq., dated Bath, 7th November, 1767.

life in England, must grow out of the honour which you may, and I trust will, acquire by a resolute and unspotted administration of the Company's affairs in Bengal. Your integrity and the goodness of your heart must be acknowledged by all who know you; and it is with pleasure I observe, that you have set out with a due attention to other necessary and public qualifications. Continue in the full exertion of that steadiness and resolution with which you began your government. Your judgment s sound. Set a just value, then, upon every opinion of your own, and always entertain a prudent degree of suspicion of the advice of any man who can possibly be biassed by self-interested motives. Before I touch upon particulars, permit me to urge, in general, the necessity there is for you and the whole Council and Committee to join in holding the military under due subordination and subjection. The dangerous consequences which may ensue from the least relaxation of command over a body so numerous as the English officers, should ever be thought of with horror, and the good effects of maintaining an inflexible authority cannot be too often recollected, in the instance of the late association.

"I am glad to find that you are upon your guard against the pride and ambition of the Co-

lonel, who, if there be any merit in the conduct of the military officers, will certainly claim the whole to himself, and write the world to that purpose. His last, I should say his first dispute, whether the Governor or the Commanding Officer of the troops ought to have the title of Commander-in-Chief, was such an open and audacious attack upon the dignity of your office, that I am surprised you let it pass unnoticed. Had a minute been made of it, he would infallibly have been dismissed the service.

"It is with great concern I observe that you have consented to the increase of the military establishment, by the raising of four regiments of horse, which will be an exorbitant, and yet useless, expense. General Carnac knows, as I do, that black cavalry, instead of being serviceable, are very detrimental to us. I am also sorry, that you have augmented the artillery. One independent company at Calcutta, in time of peace, will answer every purpose. To have more, either there or at Ghyrotty, is only sacrificing the lives of so many men, without service. The Directors, I fear, will reprimand you on these matters, for they seem much inclined to lessen even the establishment I made for Bengal.

"The sooner you confine the whole of our force within the boundary of the Caramnassa

the better. The Abdally's invasion of Bengal must be a mere bugbear. So long a march is next to impossible; and therefore I think he will never attempt it. The Mahratta is the only power we have to manage, as invasions from them must retard our revenues, though they cannot endanger our possessions.

"You certainly did well in persevering not to restore the Monghyr officers; and I hope you have obliged all, except the young lads, to embark for England.

"You will have heard, that all our letters and proceedings have been laid before both Houses of Parliament, and publicly read. Not only the Directors, but every man of consequence from Bengal, have been examined upon oath before the House of Lords; so that thousands of people are now well acquainted with the revenues, forces, and politics of India, and of Bengal in particular. Permit me here again, my friend, to remind you of the conspicuous situation you are placed in. Consider well the great expectations which this nation entertains of extricating itself out of its present difficulties, by the skill and conduct of the Governor of Bengal. You must therefore exert yourself to the utmost to fulfil its hopes; for, as I have already observed, hereupon depends, whether

you will be a very respectable character, or not, upon your return to England.

"With regard to myself, my health has been very indifferent ever since my arrival; but I am now following a regimen which has done me much service, and will, I hope, recover me entirely. I have met with the most gracious reception from the King and Queen, and a very respectful and honourable one from the Court of Directors; nor is there any doubt of my getting an English Peerage, whenever I make application for that purpose, which, I understand, is always the custom: but the very unsettled Administration, and my private notions, will not admit of my applying at present. Hereafter, in all probability, the thing will come to pass.

"With regard to the Directors, I tell you frankly, that no one can entertain a worse opinion of many of them than I do. They have neither abilities nor resolution to manage such important concerns as are now under their care. Of this the world in general seem very sensible; and yet what to do I protest I know not. An attempt to reform may throw matters into greater confusion.

"You see my jaghire is at last continued to me and my representatives for ten years after the expiration of my present right. I am more obliged to the Proprietors for this grant than to the Directors, who threw a great deal of cold

water upon it. Indeed, their whole conduct towards me and my associates in Committee has shown weakness, or something worse; for they have upon all occasions endeavoured to lessen the acquisitions we have obtained for them, and kept every thing that might contribute to our reputation as secret as possible; and, if Parliament had not brought our transactions to light, mankind would have been ignorant of what has been done. In short, they appear very envious and jealous of my influence, and give ear to every idle story of my being hostile towards them. Every thing looks as if we were not upon good terms. They have even asked my opinion upon their affairs in such a mean, sneaking manner, that I have informed one of them, unless I am applied to in form, and unless more attention be paid to my advice, I shall decline giving any whatsoever. Thus stand matters at present; but how long they may remain so I know not, nor what changes may happen at the next election.

"From the manner in which I carried the extension of the jaghire, I conclude the Directors will pay more attention to my opinions than they lately did; but it will be rather through fear than inclination. They desired, and I consented to a conference with them, and intended going to London from Shropshire on purpose; but my health has obliged me to come to Bath, where I

daily expect a deputation to consult on many important points which the gentlemen cannot themselves readily determine upon."

His hopes of the efficacy of the Bath waters for removing his complaints were soon disappointed. Not experiencing that benefit from them which he had expected, his physicians recommended his leaving England for a season, and trying the air of the south of France. In the beginning of January, 1768, he removed from Bath to Berkeley Square; and on the 17th of that month, Mr. Strachey, in a letter to Mr. Verelst, written to recommend a young man, to whom Lord Clive had promised a letter, observes, "Knowing this state of the case, I think myself bound to acquaint you with it, for the physicians have wisely prohibited Lord Clive from all attention to business. He is to-day much better than when I wrote you t'other day; but we are taught not to expect his recovery without the assistance of the south of France."

But the activity of Lord Clive's mind was not easily restrained by bodily suffering. Even during this period he wrote several important letters to the Court of Directors, and to their Committees of Correspondence and Treasury, chiefly on their military affairs. On the 19th, he writes his friend Call at Madras: "I have suffered so much ever since my arrival in England, that I

have not been able to interfere so much with public affairs as I could wish; and the bilious disorder is at last arrived at such a height, that there seems no other remedy but that of going to the south without delay; and in two hours I hope to be getting into my carrriage for that purpose.

"With regard to the present Court of Directors, I can only say they are universally despised and hated; will certainly be hard pushed next April, and, if I and my friends do not support them, must fall. Their ignorance and obstinacy are beyond conception.

"I write the Nabob Mahommed Ali by this conveyance. The Queen received his presents in the most gracious manner from my hands. I was in private with her Majesty in her closet near an hour; and the chief part of the time was taken up about the Nabob and his prosperity. The Queen has promised me to write to him in the most gracious manner, and assured me at the same time of her disposition to render the Nabob any service in her power.

"We shall come very strong into Parliament this year — seven without opposition, probably one more; Lord Clive, Shrewsbury; Richard Clive, Montgomery; William and George Clive, Bishop's Castle; John Walsh, Worcester; Henry

Strachey, Pontefract; and Edmund Maskelyne, probably either for Whitechurch or Cricklade.

"As things were too far advanced in favour of Dupré before my arrival, I take it for granted we shall see you next year, when I shall be glad to receive you with open arms, and assist you with all my interest in your parliamentary or any other views whatever; for, although I suffer excruciating torments from the nature of my disorder, yet, if we may credit the faculty, there is no danger of loss of life."

He set out, accompanied by Lady Clive and a small party, consisting of her relation, Mrs. Latham, Mr. Maskelyne, her brother, Mr. Strachey and Mr. Ingham. The change seems instantly to have produced a beneficial effect; and he had not long left England when we find, from the letters of his friends, that his improved state of health and freedom from pain enabled him to diminish the quantity of opium he had previously been obliged to use.

A few days after his arrival in Paris, he wrote Mr. Verelst as follows*:—"I am certain it will give you infinite pleasure to hear of my safe arrival at this place, and of my recovery beyond what either my friends or myself could have imagined or expected in so short a time. The

* Paris, 9th February, 1768.

remedy, I believe, was found out before I left England; but the travelling and climate have undoubtedly done me much good. In short, by the time I have spent a few months in the south of France, and drank the waters of Spa, I doubt not of enjoying a better state of health than I have done for some years.

"I cannot but acknowledge that my recovery gives me a more particular pleasure from the prospect I have of exerting myself in favour of the Company next winter, a time very critical for them indeed, since it will then be finally determined upon what footing they are to be in future; whether a part, or the whole, or none of the power be lodged in them hereafter. Let me tell you in secret, that I have the King's command to lay before him my ideas of the Company's affairs both at home and abroad, with a promise of his countenance and protection in every thing I might attempt for the good of the nation and the Company. Mr. Grenville also, who, I think, must be minister at last, paid me a visit at Berkeley Square, two days before I left London, and did me the honour to say, that, in his opinion, it was the duty of the Court of Directors to let no steps whatever be taken, either at home or abroad, without my advice; and to assure me that either in ministry or out of it, he would preach that

doctrine in the House of Commons." In the sequel of this letter he advises the Governor to attempt to send home a million, or even two, of gold, and enters at great length into the impolicy of the Directors in their intentions to change the arrangements which he had made regarding the salt trade. His opinions on the latter subject are always clear and consistent; and he was strongly impressed with a conviction of the soundness of the advice which he uniformly offered on this very important point. The former advice proves, as does his whole correspondence, his undoubting belief, that Bengal, if its affairs were wisely and economically administered, would always afford a large available surplus. He complains justly, as many circumstanced like himself have since done, of the general ignorance that prevailed on Indian affairs. "It is certain," says he, writing about this time to a friend*, "that both the Directors and Parliament are superlatively ignorant of our affairs abroad, notwithstanding the great lights received in the late inquiries; yet still they remain in the dark, and comprehend nothing about it. If my constitution would have admitted of my attending Parliament and General

* Letter to Mr. Beecher, dated Montpelier, 3d March, 1768.

Courts, I am vain enough to think my knowledge and influence would have set things to rights. However, it is certain my own interest, my gratitude and affection for the Company, will not allow me to be silent; and if my constitution will not permit me to speak, I will most certainly write."

From Paris he proceeded to Lyons, and thence to Montpelier, where he resided for some time. Finding his health extremely improved, he returned to Paris, whence it would appear that he visited the Spa; and, in spite of the remonstrances of his physicians, who advised him to pass the winter on the Continent, returned to England, probably in the end of August or beginning of September.

During his absence the Parliament had been dissolved, and a general election had taken place, by the return of several members to which his political influence was considerably increased. He was at this time annoyed, for a moment, by a pamphlet which Sir Robert Fletcher published, regarding the proceedings on his court-martial, and was inclined to answer it; a resolution from which he was, with difficulty, diverted by the representations of his friends; who assured him, that Sir Robert's pamphlet had produced no unfavourable effect; as every military officer was of

opinion, from Sir Robert's own statements, that he had been leniently dealt with.

Soon after his return to England, he had taken his place in Parliament for Shrewsbury; and he delivered his opinions in the House with considerable effect on Indian affairs, to which he confined himself. He also occasionally took a part in the proceedings of the Court of Proprietors. At this crisis, the terms of the agreement negotiated between the Government and East India Company became the subject of discussion; and the conditions were agitated by the adverse parties with uncommon heat in the General Courts. Lord Clive's temper, keen and impatient of controul, was but ill suited for such a warfare. He soon felt this, and wrote from Bath, where he had gone for his health, to communicate on the subject with his constant and valuable friend, Mr. Grenville, who gave him the soundest advice.

"Wotton, Dec. 29. 1768.

"My dear Lord,

"I am much obliged to you for the honour of your letter of the 24th of this month, which I received, together with the minutes of the last General Meeting of the East India Company, by the last post. I think that you are extremely in the right in your determination not to leave the care of your health during this short vacation, in

order to attend at the next meeting for the consideration of the proposals from the Court of Directors to the Treasury, with the Treasury's answer, and the resolution of the Directors thereupon, which, you tell me, is postponed to the 4th of January next. The account which you have sent to me of what passed at the last Court, is of itself a sufficient reason, in my opinion, for your declining to attend at the next, whilst things are in the state of uncertainty and irregularity in which they appear to me; and, therefore, even if your health would allow it (the establishment of which must be with me and all your friends superior to any other consideration), yet I should not advise you to interfere in these questions till they come nearer to an issue. If these disputes shall be carried to greater lengths, your opinion will necessarily have still greater weight, both within doors and without: if, on the contrary, they shall all be agreed and settled before the next meeting, I do not see that your interposition will be attended with any credit to you, or advantage to the public. If this great question is to be brought before the Parliament, with every thing in a state of uncertainty, as it was last year, as you truly observe that it may be necessary for you to take some part there, it seems to me that it would be more desirable for you to keep yourself at liberty in that case, and

not to pledge yourself beforehand to no purpose, at a General Court. These, my dear Lord, are my sentiments upon the general situation; which as you desired to know them, I have given to you with the utmost freedom. As to the particular proposals, I wish to reserve them till we meet, when we may consider them at large; whereas, at present, it is impossible for me, on many accounts, to enter into the discussion of them. I sincerely hope that the Bath waters may be attended with every benefit to you which you can desire from them; or, what is more, which your friends can desire for you. Mrs. Grenville joins with me in these wishes, as well as in presenting our respects to Lady Clive, and our best compliments to Mr. Strachey. I am, my dear Lord, with the most perfect regard and esteem,

"Your most affectionate friend
" and most faithful humble servant,
" GEORGE GRENVILLE."

Mr. Grenville reverts to this subject in a future letter, in which, at the entreaty of a friend, he earnestly solicits Lord Clive not to interpose his negative on the proposition for restoring Sir Robert Fletcher to the Company's service. "Since I began this letter*," says he, "which I

* Letter, dated Wotton, 28th May, 1769.

intended to have sent by the last post, but was prevented by an accidental illness, which, I hope, is now over, I have had an account of the bad news which has been received from the East Indies. This answers so exactly to what you foretold in the House of Commons, that it leaves those without excuse who have totally neglected all the means you then pointed out to obviate the evil consequences which are likely to attend their present situation. This event too is, I think, a fresh argument to confirm you in your former disposition, not to interpose in any private disputes, but to keep yourself in the honourable state of a public man, only contributing his advice and assistance when asked, to preserve to this country that great empire which he had so great a share in acquiring. These, my dear Lord, are my sentiments; and whether they are well founded or not, I am sure you will excuse my troubling you with them from the motive of it, which is the sincere regard I bear to you."

Lord Chatham having resigned his office of Privy Seal in October, 1768, and a reconciliation having taken place between him and Lord Temple, as well as between Mr. George Grenville and the Rockingham party, the opposition soon became very powerful, and united the principal talents of the country. Parties ran high,

and the debates were often stormy. Lord Clive aided with all his influence his friend Mr. Grenville, to whom, both from public principle and private feeling, he was strongly attached. In one of the many political changes which took place at this time, Mr. Wedderburn was in danger of being deprived of a seat in the House; and from the following letter of Mr. Grenville, it appears that Lord Clive stepped forward in the handsomest manner to preserve to his party the benefit of that gentleman's great and useful talents.

"Bolton Street, May 10. 1769.

"My dear Lord,

"I have this moment received the honour of your letter, whilst Mr. Wedderburn was with me, to whom I have executed your commission. He is extremely sensible of this great mark of your Lordship's esteem and regard, and still more so of the very honourable manner in which you have made the proposition for rechoosing him into Parliament, which he desires me to assure your Lordship shall certainly remain a secret with him, till you give him leave to disclose it, though, as the offer which you made when this extraordinary measure of forcing him out of Parliament was first talked of, is already known to five or six different persons, that secret is not

so entire as I now wish it was; however, I hope it will not get out, so as to be attended with the least inconvenience to you. If any thing could give me a higher opinion of your character and conduct than that which I entertained before, it would be your behaviour upon this occasion, which I am fully persuaded, as soon as it is proper to be known, the world will see with the same sentiments of approbation, though not with the same feelings of your constant friendship and kindness, which fill the mind of,

"My dear Lord,

"Your Lordship's most affectionate

"and most devoted humble servant,

"GEORGE GRENVILLE."

Mr. Grenville's health had already began to decline, and soon after rapidly failed. His last exertion in the House, that of carrying through the Act which goes under his name for regulating the proceedings in the House of Commons in contested elections, was of itself a great public service. It was passed in April, 1770, and he died on the 13th of November following. This event was communicated to Lord Clive, then at Bath, by Mr. Wedderburn, in the following letter, which is also interesting in other respects: —

"My dear Lord,

"The misfortune we dreaded has at last happened. I could not prevail upon myself to send you the first account of it, knowing from my own experience how much you would feel upon such an occasion. I had it immediately in my view for three days together, and yet I was shocked with the event that I had expected.

"I am not able to send you any distinct account of the opening of the Parliament, for I have not yet been in the House of Commons; and if people would impute my absence to its true cause, a real indifference to all that passes there at present, I should continue for some time in the same ignorance. Mr. Woodfall has done me the honour of making me refuse an office that never was offered to me. If it had, your Lordship will do me the justice to believe, that you would not have received the first intimation of it from a newspaper. Whatever part I may take in this conjuncture, will never be decided without the fullest communication with you; and I am persuaded your Lordship's sentiments upon the present unfortunate occasion are so similar to those I feel, that no circumstance is likely to make us think differently. It is possible, I believe, even in these times, for a man to acquire some degree of credit without being enlisted in any party; and, if it is, the situation, I am sure,

is more eligible than any other that either a Court or an Opposition have to bestow.

"If Bath agrees with your Lordship, as I trust it does, I should not wish to see you in town; but I very much wish that it were in my power to make you a visit at Bath: I should then have the pleasure of hearing your sentiments upon the present state of affairs, which I assure you, without any sort of compliment, but in the plainest sincerity, will always have more weight with me than perhaps you will wish them to have; and I should likewise have the good fortune to escape hearing the sentiments of people who, in this town, have no other employment than to speculate for their neighbours."

"Lincoln's Inn Fields,
"14th November, 1770."

Lord Clive's answer is equally creditable to his heart and understanding;

"Bath, 18th November, 1770.

"Dear Sir,

"If the receipt of your very obliging and confidential letter had not roused me, I doubt much whether I should have prevailed upon myself to put pen to paper, though there is something within that tells me, I shall at last overcome a disorder so very distressing both to the mind (and to the body). Although the waters agree

with me better than any place I have yet tried, yet by my feelings, a journey abroad I fear must be undertaken, before I can obtain a perfect recovery of my health.

"Mr. Grenville's death, though long expected, could not but affect me very severely. Gratitude first bound me to him: a more intimate connection afterwards gave an opportunity of admiring his abilities, and respecting his worth and integrity. The dissolution of our valuable friend has shipwrecked all our hopes for the present; and my indisposition hath not only made me indifferent [to the world of politics *], but to the world in general. What effect returning health may have, I cannot answer for; but if I can judge for myself in my present situation, I wish to support that independency which will be approved of by my friends in particular, and by the public in general. My sentiments are the same as yours, with regard to our conduct in the present times.

"Your delicacy towards me serves only to convince me of the propriety of my conduct in leaving you the absolute master of your own conduct in Parliament, free from all control but that of your own judgment, and I am happy in this opportunity"—(*defect in the MS.*)

* Defect in the MS.

"Your great and uncommon abilities must sooner or latter place you in one of the first posts of this kingdom; and you may be assured no man on earth wishes to see your honour and your independency firmly established in this kingdom, more than,

"Dear Sir,

"Your affectionate friend,

"and obedient servant,

"CLIVE."

Mr. Grenville's death was felt by Lord Clive as a great and almost irreparable loss. That statesman was the person in public life to whom he had always most closely attached himself. Mr. Grenville's great political experience, his honourable disposition, his warm and unvarying friendship, made Lord Clive ever ready to listen to his advice, and in general willing to follow it. On his death, the party, which had been kept together chiefly by his personal influence, separated, some accepting office with the Minister, among whom was Mr. Wedderburn, who was made Solicitor-General; others joining the Rockingham party, then in opposition. For some time Lord Clive seems to have avoided taking a decided part in public affairs, though his parliamentary interest, independent of the weight of his personal character, would have made him a

valuable acquisition to any party. Perhaps, before definitively making up his mind, he wished to ascertain the line that each was disposed to take in Indian affairs. He was thus thrown adrift on the sea of politics. That he belonged to no party bound in honour to support and do him justice, and so was occasionally exposed to the hostility of all, was perhaps one of the greatest of evils to one who had so many bitter enemies as Lord Clive, and was one of the misfortunes which he owed to the death of his excellent friend Mr. Grenville.

His time was not wholly occupied by public business. He gave up much of it to the numerous friends who were warmly attached to him, and he did not neglect his private concerns. He had purchased several noble estates in different parts of the country, and in the choice of them was not inattentive to the object of increasing his parliamentary influence. On these properties he had several mansion houses, though Walcot continued to be his favourite residence. He purchased from the Duchess of Newcastle, the noble property of Claremont, and made several changes on that magnificent place: at Bath he acquired the lease of Lord Chatham's house. In London, he still had his house in Berkeley Square. The old family seat of Styche, now much improved, was generally occupied by

some of his relations. He indulged the natural liberality of his disposition by living in a style of considerable splendour, and he laid the foundation of a choice collection of paintings, by the purchase of several master-pieces of the Italian schools.

Though only in his forty-sixth year, his friends were already fast falling around him. He had lost two sisters while he was absent in India. In May, 1771, he had to lament the death of his aged father, as he had of his sister, the Honourable Mrs Sempill, before the year was done.

The occupations which engaged him in public life, whether in Parliament or at the India House, were not of a nature to fill or satisfy a mind like his. He lived at a period when there was a rapid succession of administrations, produced more by intrigue and party arrangements than by any grand national object. There was much indecision, and a remarkable want of any commanding talent in all the various ministries that were formed. Clive, accustomed to an almost unlimited command over many provinces, often sickened almost as much at the inadequate and temporising measures of Parliament, as at the quarrels of the Directors, or the petty but exhausting intrigues of the India House; and in many parts of his correspondence vents his longings for the ease and quiet of a country life;

longings perfectly sincere and natural, but the indulgence of which, to one of his ardent and restless character, so long accustomed to the agitations of public business, would probably have failed to bring the happiness which he anticipated.

Affairs in India had in the mean time taken a very unfavourable turn. Even during the three years of the government of Mr. Verelst, a man of good judgment, of industry, and the purest intentions, a deficiency of funds was severely felt. This was not so much from a decline in the revenues, though Lord Clive had perhaps estimated them beyond their real amount, as from various other causes. The civil, military, and commercial expenses were daily increasing, when the steady hand that had checked their natural tendency to excess was removed. Immense sums were spent on building forts, barracks, &c.: the system of overcharge, and waste, from design or carelessness, again pervaded every branch of the service: the pay of the whole superior officers, civil and military, which had formerly been chiefly defrayed by the Salt Society, now fell directly on the revenues. The whole course of commerce, which had been disordered for some years, was disordered still more by the immense investments raised for the Company, not as formerly in exchange for bullion

or silver imported from Europe, but from the revenues of the country itself, and with all the disadvantageous circumstances attending a political monopoly; for, while the exportation of bullion to China continued, even the sums formerly brought by foreigners had ceased; as the English, who had large private fortunes to remit home, supplied them liberally with funds in India, in exchange for bills on Europe, which prevented for a time the importation of the precious metals as merchandise. Clive's last act had been to withdraw the Europeans from outstations, and to limit their interference with the internal trade; a measure which, however exceptionable it would be in a country where equal law existed, had become absolutely necessary where European delinquency had no adequate check, and where the grossest injustice could be practised by white traders and their agents, on the timid and defenceless natives. Soon after the Company had abolished the Salt Society, professedly on the general principle of hostility to monopolies, and to restore the trade to the natives, they published the order declaring the trade open to all, whether natives or Europeans; an act by which, contrary to their intentions, they in reality restored a more grievous and exceptionable monopoly than that which had existed before. Besides all this, the

unfortunate and ill-conducted war on the Coromandel Coast, made it necessary to send large sums from Bengal to that quarter.

There is, perhaps, no instance in history of a country that has continued, for any considerable length of time, to send a very large proportion of its revenues, as a regular tribute, out of its own territory. The difficulty is to get a country, however rich, to be able to supply the expenses of its own government. This, even in the most favourable circumstances, is no easy task. A bold, active, and resolute ruler, like Frederick of Prussia, or Lord Clive, may, by the force of personal character, reduce expenses, for a given time, within the narrowest bounds; but the natural tendency of a prosperous country is, to contrive means of consuming on the spot, by indulgences, which come to be considered as necessaries, and by corresponding salaries or allowances, the whole sum that is raised by taxation. A country like Bengal, in which the European, so far as the native was concerned, was subject to the influence of no public opinion, and so far as regarded his own countrymen, to a very imperfect one, was not likely to form an exception to this rule. The golden dreams, in which all parties had indulged from the wealth of the country, were rudely disturbed, though none were quite sure of the exact causes.

We have already seen that an agreement, for one year, was concluded between the Government and the Directors, in 1767, and renewed in the ensuing year, by which the Company became bound to pay 400,000*l.* in each of these years to the Government. When the agreement was about to expire, the Directors were again strongly pressed by the Government, and after some negotiation a bargain was concluded, by which the Company agreed to pay to the public the sum of 400,000*l.* annually, for five years longer; besides undertaking to export a certain value of British goods: they were to be at liberty to increase their dividend, during that time, to 12½ per cent., the increase not to exceed 1 per cent. in any one year. If the Company were under the necessity of reducing their dividend, an equal proportion was to be deducted from the annual payment to Government; and if their dividends were reduced to 6 per cent., the payment to the public was to cease altogether. Provision was also made for the case of a large surplus, and its appropriation prescribed.

This agreement was violently opposed in every step of its progress. Among others, Lord Clive, we have seen, was decidedly hostile to it, and used every exertion, not only with the Directors, and in the Court of Proprietors, but in his place in Parliament, to prevent its being concluded.

He was of opinion that the Directors sacrificed the interests of the Company to their fears, and that the Ministers extorted unreasonable concessions from their weakness. Writing to his brother-in-law, the Hon. Colonel Sempill, while the Act was in progress, he says*, "My journey to the south of France and the Spa waters has restored me to more health than I have enjoyed for some years; and I think, in a very short time, I shall be tired of the bustle going on in this busy world, and seek for ease in a retired country life. The newspapers will make known to you the distracted state of affairs in almost every part of the extended empire of Great Britain. It is no wonder that our East India affairs should partake of the same confusion. Administration, and the Directors, seem to think of nothing but the present moment. The one seems resolved to strip the Company of all they can; and the other to submit to any thing, rather than risk their stations, power, and authority at the next general election."—"Parliamentary concerns have embroiled me more than is good for my health, and already I begin to grow tired of them."

He had ceased to attend the General Courts, and did not even ballot upon any question, except

* Letter, dated 10th February, 1769.

that regarding the agreement with Government, which he opposed; but which, after three efforts, the combined force of the Administration and the Directors carried by a majority of 40; 290 for, 250 against.

Writing to Mr. Claud Russell*, in Bengal, he takes a comprehensive and sound view of national concerns at the turbulent period which immediately preceded the American war. "To describe the situation of our affairs at home," says he, "would require a much abler pen and more time than I am at present master of. We are drawing very fast towards a dangerous crisis, from which we can only be extricated by some first-rate genius, and where to find that genius does not appear at present. Our wide and extended possessions are become too great for the mother country, or for our abilities, to manage. America is making great strides towards independency; so is Ireland. The East Indies also, I think, cannot remain long to us, if our present constitution be not altered. A Direction for a year only, and that time entirely taken up in securing Directors for the year to come, cannot long maintain that authority which is requisite for the managing and governing such extensive, populous, rich, and powerful kingdoms as the

* 10th February, 1769.

East India Company are at present possessed of. So far are our Ministers from thinking of some plan for securing this great and national object, that they think of nothing but the present moment, and of squeezing from the Company every shilling they have to spare, and even more than they can well spare, consistent with their present circumstances. I have drawn out my thoughts on this important subject, but I dare not trust them to so divided, weak, and selfish an Administration. If Lord Chatham and Mr. Grenville should appear once more at the head of affairs (of which there is some prospect), they are the only men capable, in my opinion, of embracing such ideas, which you know are extensive ones.

"Mr. Sulivan," he continues, "still entertains hopes of being a Director, and Mr. Vansittart of being Governor of Bengal; to which ambitious views I shall give every opposition in my power. For, if I could admit, which is far from the case, that both are every way qualified for the stations they are aspiring at, yet, I know their connections to be such, that they must attempt the overthrow of that system which hitherto has been attended with so much advantage to the nation and the Company. The efforts which have been made are great, yet I am confident they will fail in their designs, if

the Directors remain united among themselves, which, at present, there is a great probability of, notwithstanding the divisions and dissensions which have lately arisen among them, about the propositions made to Government. I myself am strongly against them, as they stand at present; because I think neither the welfare of the public, nor of the Company, have been consulted, and that the Directors have committed themselves too much to administration, from an apprehension of a Parliamentary inquiry, and from a dread of being again examined at the bar of the House of Commons.

"My best wishes are offered for your speedy return to your native country with health and independency, without which there can be no happiness in this life; and the sooner that event happens, the more pleasure it will afford,

"Yours, &c."

He writes in the same style to several of his friends, and from many of his letters it appears, that the occasional disappointment suffered by a mind so ardent as his, and so little accustomed to be thwarted, had turned his thoughts strongly to retirement. "The conduct of the Directors, in committing themselves in the manner they have done to Administration," he observes in a

letter to Mr. Sykes*, "is unworthy of them, and contrary to their duty as Directors. In my conduct, I have taken up the great line of future advantage, both to the nation and to the Company. I spoke long upon the subject in the House of Commons, and with some applause, but all to no purpose; the necessities of the state, and present gain, weighed down and overpowered all argument."—"In my opinion, the sooner you return to England the better. I know that your fortune is more than sufficient, and that it has been honourably acquired. Come, then, and partake with us in country retirement; and when you want to amuse yourself in town and serve your country, be as we are, a member of Parliament. What can I say more than that I am, &c."

"To tell you the truth," says he, in a letter of the same date, to Sir Robert Barker, "after the next general election, I find myself very much disposed to withdraw myself from all public concerns whatever. My own happiness and that of my family is the only object I have in view, and that can only be obtained by retirement from the bustle and noise of a busy, debauched, and half-ruined nation."

In the April election which followed, Mr. Sulivan's party renewed their efforts to recover

* 5th March, 1769.

their seats and influence in the Direction. Immense efforts had long been making for that purpose. Many of their friends had purchased largely of India stock, and divided what they possessed, for the purpose of making new votes. The ships' husbands, as they are called, a body of great wealth and influence at the India House, who had quarrelled with the Directors, split 150,000*l.* of stock against them. Lord Shelburne was said to have split 100,000*l.* of stock to support his friend Sulivan. The Directors had alienated many of the Proprietors by opposing the increase of dividend, and they had violent differences among themselves, so that two of them refused to concur in the proposed House List. The consequence was, that Mr. Sulivan and his friends, who were also supported by the ministry, were brought into the Direction, and a very important change of system followed. The friendship that had long subsisted between Lord Clive and Mr. Vansittart, had been first shaken by the revolution effected in Bengal under Mr. Vansittart's government, when Meer Jaffier, whom Lord Clive had placed on the musnud, and protected, was dethroned: the coolness that followed was increased by Mr. Vansittart's connection with Mr. Sulivan, whom he joined in the politics of the India House; and

an open rupture, the particulars of which it is unnecessary to detail, followed, soon after Lord Clive's return to England. Vansittart's great object was to return to Bengal as Governor, or even as Governor-General of India. The restoration of his friends to power was favourable to these views; and the two parties, each of which was able to impede the other, but not entirely to carry its own objects, found it expedient to come to a compromise. The state of India absolutely required that the public affairs there should be placed on a better footing. Instead of sending out an individual, it was finally arranged that a commission of supervisors should be appointed, with very ample powers to investigate on the spot into every department of affairs, and the conduct of the public officers; to suspend, if necessary, even the presidents and councils, and to frame regulations adapted to the exigency of circumstances. To this important trust Mr. Vansittart, Colonel Forde, and Mr. Scrafton, all of whom had distinguished themselves in the country, were appointed; the first by the influence of Mr. Sulivan, the two last by that of Lord Clive. It is well known that the Aurora frigate, in which they sailed, was never heard of after leaving the Cape of Good Hope, and is supposed to have foundered at sea. Lord Clive, writing to Mr. Verelst, in the end of this year, alludes to these

transactions; "The public papers," says he*, "and your friends, will explain to you the India politics. The severe blow given the old Directors last year, by the admission of Sulivan and so many of his party, has been the occasion of all that has happened; and we were obliged to compound with Vansittart for his being Supervisor jointly with Scrafton and Forde, to prevent his going out Governor to Bengal, or Governor-General, which was the thing aimed at. Mr. Vansittart received all the support which Ministry, the Court, and Princess Dowager could give, and was very near succeeding in his ambitious designs. When you arrive in England," he continues, "you will find me at Claremont, a delightful place, about fourteen miles from London, and in your way from Portsmouth, if you land at that place."

The same views are contained in his letter of the 15th of February, 1770, to Mr. Kelsall.

"Dear Sir,

"I have received your letter, dated Dacca, January, 1769, and should have given you my sentiments upon the contents, if the appointment of Supervisors with such great powers had not made all reply useless and unnecessary. These gentlemen will, I hope, take into their

* 22d December, 1769.

most serious consideration, the state of the Company's affairs in every part of India, and apply proper remedies to every evil. I do not at all envy them their appointment, being certain they will find it a very difficult task to answer the expectations of the public, without disgusting and disobliging individuals. If they can find the happy expedient of doing strict justice to the Company, and of giving satisfaction to the civil, military, and free merchants, they will have found out an art that I was not master of during my last residence in India.

"I will not trouble you with the situation of affairs in England. Anarchy and confusion seem to have pervaded every part of the British empire. In vain can we expect our affairs shall flourish abroad, when all is going to ruin at home. The Directors are so divided among themselves, and so much taken up in struggling for power at every general election, that they have quite lost sight of the Company's interest, which is daily sacrificed to their own views, and the views of particular Proprietors, to answer their purposes."—

"With regard to myself, having struggled long enough against the tide to very little purpose, I am determined the approaching election shall put an end to my activity, in support of any set of men whatever. It is beyond my

power to do the Company any farther service; and the disposition to ease and retirement gains ground upon me daily. The best and soundest advice I can give you is, to return to England rather with a moderate competency, while you have youth and constitution to enjoy it, than by staying longer, lose that youth, and sacrifice that constitution, which no riches can possibly compensate for. Hoping soon to see you in England, I am,

"Dear Sir,

"Your sincere friend and affectionate kinsman,

"CLIVE."

The elections of April, 1770 and 1771, in which Mr. Sulivan's party was still powerfully supported, had not a tendency to recall Lord Clive's mind from his plan of retreat; — "The loss of the Supervisors," says he, writing to Mr. Henry Moore, Chief of Bussorah *, "since the last advices from India, is looked upon as certain. I hope the same Providence, which has so often manifested itself in our favour in the East, will continue to watch over us, and extricate us from the almost insurmountable difficulties in which we seem to be involved. It is not unlikely but a new commission may take place; but where the Directors will find men

* 8th April, 1771.

every way qualified to execute such a task, is hard to say." In the conclusion he adds, "I am come to the resolution of withdrawing myself entirely from India affairs, and spending the rest of my days in ease and retirement." These were the natural longings for retreat, and aspirations after repose, of a great and active mind, fatigued with petty exertions, and disappointed in its endeavours to be useful; but it was a repose which Clive was not destined to enjoy.

Meanwhile, the derangements in the various branches of the Company's affairs abroad continued to increase. No one felt more strongly than Lord Clive the evils that resulted from them, or was more aware of the extreme difficulty of applying a remedy; but at the same time his experience taught him, that by a judicious management much might be effected. The chief sources of expense arose from a jealousy of Sujah-u-Dowlah's designs, and from the ill-conducted war against Hyder Ali. In a letter to Sir Robert Barker, written at a time when there was a very general alarm, which produced a great fall of India stock, he gives very distinctly his ideas of the leading principles of our Indian policy; — "Both the Directors and the nation*," says he, "are more apprehensive of the consequence of a rupture with Sujah

* 5th March, 1769.

Dowlah than I confess I am, even from your accounts of the state of affairs in that part of the world.

"All the efforts of that ambitious prince must prove vain against our numbers, revenues, and discipline. His sepoys, when they come to action, will never stand against ours, headed by English officers; and, if he trusts to his infantry alone, the loss of a battle will be ruin. But if he makes war upon us in Bengal with them, he may distress us for a time, and lessen both our investments and revenues, which is the greatest detriment the nation and Company can suffer. At present, however, I both wish and hope, he has no views to the southward, but that he bends his thoughts towards Delhi, and wishes to have the King with him. So do I too, if the King's consent could be obtained for that purpose. I was always apprehensive the King would endeavour to embark us, by some means or other, in his extensive views of going to Delhi, and reducing to obedience by our means all Hindostan. This is a plan I have always opposed; and, to tell you the truth, I wish our troops were all in Bengal, and that no other object employed our attention, but that of defending ourselves when attacked. I wish the King was gone to Delhi or any where, so as we had nothing more to do with him; or that he could be prevailed

upon to spend the rest of his days and money quietly at Patna. I think the wisest scheme we could pursue would be, to take no open part with these Hindostan princes, but privately promote their quarrelling to all eternity."

His letter to General Joseph Smith on the war in the Carnatic, is too creditable to that gallant officer to be omitted.

"Berkeley Square, 9th March, 1770.

"Dear Sir,

"I have received, and am much obliged to you for your accurate and circumstantial letter of the 15th of June, 1769.* Our misfortunes, and I may add, our mismanagements on the coast, have been great indeed: but it is some satisfaction to me to find, that your conduct has been such as all who know you had reason to expect; and that, whoever may have been to blame, no impeachment can be laid against you. I need not enter into reflections upon the fundamental errors of the war. For the honour of the nation and the Company, I wish they could be for ever buried in oblivion, or at least remembered only by ourselves, to warn us upon any future occasion. The measure of sending field-deputies has justly been con-

* This letter fills forty-eight pages, and is a very curious and valuable document in Indian history.

demned by every body. Gentlemen in the civil service may be very properly employed out of the presidency in the collection of the revenues; but nothing can be more absurd and pernicious than sending them to a camp, where they can only embarrass or obstruct plans and operations which they do not understand. I sincerely wish that the peace, however ingloriously made, may continue: but this is merely a wish, and by no means my expectation. I am with great regard, &c."

The difficulties in Bengal went on increasing. Mr. Cartier's mild but feeble government, which began in January 1770, was marked by one of those horrible famines which afflict a populous country like Bengal, dependent chiefly on its agriculture, above all others. One third of the natives are computed to have perished by sickness and famine. The revenues and trade of the country, which were suffering before, were still more disordered by this new calamity. The expense of establishments, instead of diminishing, increased; and instead of a surplus revenue to be remitted home, the extent of bills which had been drawn on the Court of Directors in England, during the latter part of Mr. Verelst's Government, was prodigiously increased. On Mr. Cartier's resignation, it was necessary to think of some able successor to meet the diffi-

culties that were so sensibly felt. Mr. Hastings was finally pitched upon. We have seen that that gentleman had served for some time in an important situation under Lord Clive. He was in Council during Vansittart's administration, and his minutes evince the extent of his information and talents. He accompanied Mr. Vansittart home, and had remained in England about four years, when the pressure of narrow circumstances again forced him to think of the East.

Mr. Sykes, in a letter to Lord Clive, dated Calcutta, 28th of March, 1768, observes, "Your Lordship knows my regard for Mr. Hastings, and the intimacy which we have maintained during so many years."—"I have now brought his affairs nearly to a conclusion, and sorry I am to say, they turn out more to the credit of his moderation than knowledge of the world. He is almost literally worth nothing, and must return to India, or want bread. I therefore make it my earnest request to your Lordship, that, even if you cannot consistently promote his reappointment to the Company's service, you will at least not give any opposition thereto." At this time parties ran very high between the Directors and the party of Sulivan and Vansittart, to which Hastings had attached himself. Lord Clive did not, however reject this appeal to his generosity, in behalf of a man for whom he had

always felt a kindness; "Mr. Hastings' connection with Vansittart," says he in reply*, "subjects him to many inconveniences. The opposition given the Directors this year, prevented my obtaining his return to Bengal in Council. Indeed he is so great a dupe to Vansittart's politics, that I think it would be improper that he should go to Bengal in any station, and I am endeavouring to get him out to Madras, high in Council there, in which I believe I shall succeed." In the course of the following year, Mr. Hastings was accordingly sent to Madras, second in Council, and there distinguished himself by his zeal and intelligence. The loss of Vansittart in the Aurora, probably took away the chief objection to his removal to Calcutta; and the disturbed state of public affairs, requiring the presence of a man of the first ability, to restore them to order, and to regain the public confidence, he was actively recommended by Lord Clive, as the man in India the best fitted for the charge. In 1771, he was accordingly appointed Governor of Bengal. The letter which Lord Clive addressed to him on this occasion is too remarkable to be omitted, not only as it concerns the two perhaps, most eminent men who ever held that high office, and throws so much

12th November, 1768.

light on the character of both, but as it overflows with the soundest practical wisdom. It is difficult to calculate what effect the influence of the very superior men whom he proposed as a Council, might have had on the future fortunes and history of India. But neither the Directors nor the Ministers were sufficiently advanced in their views of Indian policy, or possessed sufficient expansion of mind to adopt a measure in which the expense of employing first-rate men was as nothing, compared with the results that might have been anticipated.

"Berkeley Square, 1st August, 1771.

"Dear Sir,

"The despatch of the Lapwing gives me an early opportunity of congratulating with you on your removal to Bengal; and as my zeal for the service actuated me to take the share I did in your appointment, the same principle prevails upon me to offer you a few of my ideas upon the important Government in which you now preside.

"Two or three months ago, when the plan of Supervisors was renewed, Sir George Colebrooke and Mr. Purling desired my opinion. My advice was, that, as the prosperity of the Company was now become a matter of very serious national concern, it behoved them to show that, in

appointments of this nature, they were guided, not by the view of particular friends, but merely by that zeal which the duty of their station demanded, for preserving and rendering permanent our possessions in India; and that, therefore, they should turn their thoughts towards men who stood high in public character and reputation. I proposed Mr. Wedderburn, Mr. Cornwall, and Sir Jeffrey Amherst, together with you, as Governor, and one of the Council; and that these five should be invested with all the powers civil and military. Sir Jeffrey Amherst, however, declined. As to the two former, they might be prevailed upon; but the Directors do not seem ready to embrace any great comprehensive plan of supervisorship, so as to make it an object for men of such consequence. My last proposition was, that the Company should revert to the plan of my Government, viz. that a Committee of five should be appointed out of the best and ablest men in Bengal, of whom the Governor should be the head; and this, I imagine, will be adopted.

"The situation of affairs requires that you should be very circumspect and active. You are appointed Governor at a very critical time, when things are suspected to be almost at the worst, and when a general apprehension prevails of the mismanagement of the Company's affairs.

The last parliamentary inquiry has thrown the whole state of India before the public, and every man sees clearly, that as matters are now conducted abroad, the Company will not long be able to pay the 400,000*l.* to Government. The late dreadful famine, or a war, either with Sujah-u-Dowlah, or the Mahrattas, will plunge us into still deeper distress. A discontented nation and disappointed Minister will then call to account a weak and pusillanimous Court of Directors, who will turn the blow from themselves upon their agents abroad; and the consequences must be ruinous both to the Company and the servants. In this situation you see the necessity of exerting yourself in time, provided the Directors give you proper powers, without which, I confess, you can do nothing; for self-interest or ignorance will obstruct every plan you can form for the public good.

"You are upon the spot, and will learn my conduct from disinterested persons; and I wish your government to be attended, as mine was, with success to the Company, and with the consciousness of having discharged every duty with firmness and fidelity. Be impartial and just to the public, regardless of the interest of individuals, where the honour of the nation, and the real advantage of the Company are at stake, and resolute in carrying into execution your determination,

which I hope will at all times be rather founded upon your own opinion than that of others.

"The business of politics and finance being so extensive, the Committee should not be embarrassed with private concerns. They ought not, therefore, to be allowed to trade. But their emoluments ought to be so large as to render trade unnecessary to the attainment of a competent fortune. For this purpose I am confident the salt will prove very sufficient. The Society should be formed upon an improvement of the plan which was not perfected in my time. The price to the natives was too great, and so was the advantage to the servants. Reduce both, and I am persuaded there will be no complaint of oppression on the one hand, or want of emolument on the other.

"The Company's servants should all have a subsistence, but every idea of raising a fortune, till they are entitled to it by some years' service, ought to be suppressed. If a general system of economy could be introduced, it would be happy for individuals as well as for the public. The expenses of the Company in Bengal are hardly to be supported. Great savings, I am certain, may be made. Bills for fortifications, cantonments, contracts, &c. must be abolished, together with every extravagant charge for travelling, diet, parade, and pomp, of subordinates. In

short, by economy alone the Company may yet preserve its credit and affluence.

"With regard to political measures, they are to be taken according to the occasion. When danger arises, every precaution must be made use of, but at the same time you must be prepared to meet and encounter it. This you must do with cheerfulness and confidence, never entertaining a thought of miscarrying, till the misfortune actually happens; and even then you are not to despair, but be constantly contriving and carrying into execution schemes for retrieving affairs; always flattering yourself with an opinion that time and perseverance will get the better of every thing.

"From the little knowledge I have of you I am convinced that you have not only abilities and personal resolution, but integrity, and moderation with regard to riches; but I thought I discovered in you a diffidence in your own judgment, and too great an easiness of disposition *,

* Clive, in many of his letters, warns those who were placed in offices of trust against that easy good-nature which can find its proper place only in private life. Writing to Sir Robert Barker, one of the friends whom he most valued (8th October, 1766), in answer to a letter which contained some remonstrances on certain opinions which he was said to have expressed, he remarks, "The part I have acted towards you ought to have precluded every suspicion injurious to the sufficiency of your abilities, or to the integrity of your con-

which may subject you insensibly to be *led*, where you ought to *guide*. Another evil which may arise from it is, that you may pay too great an attention to the reports of the natives, and be inclined to look upon things in the worst, instead of the best, light. A proper confidence in yourself, and never-failing hope of success, will be a bar to this and every other ill that your situation is liable to; and, as I am sure that you are not wanting in abilities for the great office of Governor, I must add that an opportunity is now given you of making yourself one of the most distinguished characters of this country.

"I perceive I have been very free in delivering my sentiments; but to make an apology were to contradict the opinion I profess to have of your understanding, and to doubt whether you would receive this as a token of my esteem."

"It is, perhaps, unnecessary to add, that this letter, which I have written in the fullest confidence, should be kept entirely to yourself. If

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duct, and shown that my doubts (if they can be so called) of your not at all times acting up to your character and station, could only proceed from the knowledge I have of your great good-nature and mildness of disposition, — qualities which though amiable in private life, have ever some ascendency over the dictates of reason, and will sometimes, in public life, enervate even the principle and spring of action."

a reciprocal communication of our sentiments on India affairs be agreeable to you, you may depend upon my continuing the correspondence in such manner as to show that I am, with the sincerest wishes for your honour and success,

"Dear Sir,

"Your very faithful humble servant,

"CLIVE."

## CHAP. XVIII.

While Lord Clive was every day more and more desirous of disengaging himself from the vexatious and unsatisfactory annoyances of Leadenhall Street politics, yet unwilling to forsake altogether the means which they afforded him of promoting the interest of his friends, and of influencing beneficially the government of our Indian empire, as to the fate of which it was impossible that he could be indifferent, the progress of events drew him once more conspicuously forward on the stage of public life, and desperate attempts were made to ruin at once his fortune and his reputation. It was his fate to suffer, not for his vices or errors, but for his virtues. His upright and honourable discharge of his painful duties, during his second government of Bengal, was at the root of all the persecutions which he afterwards endured. The men whom he made his enemies, by a firm yet temperate exercise of authority, resolved, if they could not justify their own conduct, to embitter, to the

utmost of their power, the feelings of the statesman who had disturbed them in the career of unlawful gain. They had attempted to injure him in the courts at the India House. The changes in public affairs now enabled them to point an attack against him on a larger theatre, in the British Parliament.

We have seen that the rumours of the boundless wealth of India, the extent of the provinces conquered, and the amount of the revenue acquired, had raised the question to whom those conquests belonged,—to the trading company that had made them, or to the country and sovereign under whose auspices they were made? and that, to prevent the decision of this question, for which neither party was perfectly prepared, a compromise had been entered into between Government and the Directors, in 1767, and afterwards renewed. But disasters and mismanagement in India and at home had, in the course of a few years, reduced the Company's affairs to such distress that, far from being able to pay the sum stipulated, it became very problematical if they would be able to discharge their ordinary debts. The Directors were willing to throw the blame on their servants abroad, whom they charged for acting contrary to their orders; while they, on their part, defended themselves as they best could from the imputations cast

upon them. Reports of oppression in India were widely circulated; and the private fortunes rapidly accumulated, that were every day brought home from that country (fortunes large in themselves and exaggerated by report), were held by many sufficiently to prove the truth of the charges.

The British Ministry, at that moment, contained no man of extraordinary talent, and its members were averse to any extensive views of civil polity: besides, they had their hands too full of American affairs, and of intestine quarrels, which ran very high, to leave them any wish to launch into the wide ocean of Indian concerns, of which, in common with all the rest of the nation, they were profoundly ignorant. At the same time, the progress of events made it necessary that something should be attempted. So early as May, 1771, the Ministers, who were aware that from no individual could so much and so sound information and advice be received as from Lord Clive, had shown a desire to confer with him. As he had always been a steady supporter of the politics of Mr. Grenville, who had long been in opposition, he was not then in habits of personal communication with any of the leading members of the Government. To obviate this difficulty recourse was had to Mr. Wedderburn, the Solicitor-General and Lord

Clive's personal friend, who wrote him a letter*, in which he observes, "There are no public news in town. We had a little mobbing last night†, but not to any great excess. My neighbour, the Speaker, had his windows mauled exceedingly; but, by great good fortune, the gentlemen were so busy with his that they left mine untouched.

"Lord Rochford‡, a few days ago, desired that I would ask your Lordship if you would allow him to talk over Indian affairs with you. He says that it is his duty to bestow more attention than has hitherto been employed upon an object of the utmost consequence to the nation, and that he wishes to improve or to form his ideas from your conversation. I told him it was uncertain when you would return to town; but I was persuaded, your zeal for the public service would incline you to assist Government with your advice, whenever that subject was taken into serious consideration. I believe the answer was such as your Lordship would have wished me to make; and I must do him the justice to say, he

* Dated 9th May, 1771.

† This was on the illumination in consequence of the release from the Tower of the Lord Mayor and Alderman Oliver, who had been committed to custody for imprisoning a Serjeant-at-arms of the House of Commons.

‡ Then Secretary of State.

held a very proper language upon the subject of India, and seemed to feel the importance of it."

Lord Clive, in his answer*, observes, "I am happy to find Lord Rochford thinks so justly of the importance of our possessions in the East Indies; and yet in these times of (discord) and confusion, much, I fear, cannot be expected from his laudable endeavours to benefit the public by securing and improving our acquisitions in those parts. When I returned to England in the year 1767, my thoughts were much taken up with the flattering prospect of assisting Government to complete a work which I had only begun; and I intimated as much to the King in a private audience which I was honoured with soon after my arrival; but a tedious and severe illness prevented me from carrying my ideas into execution, and afforded me leisure for reflection. The result was, that I soon perceived that unless a settled administration, possessed of both resolution and power adequate to the object, undertook thoroughly to engage Parliament in the business, no material advantage could be obtained for the nation by any light I could give. After my recovery, I had many conversations with Mr. Grenville upon the subject, who, to the last, was of the same way of thinking. Mr. Strachey has,

12th May.

with the materials I have furnished him, undertaken that task; but I think he cannot complete the work in less than eighteen months. You are acquainted with my design of going to the Spa, and spending the next winter in Italy. I can only be in London a few days at the latter end of July. If that time should be convenient to Lord Rochford, and he will signify his pleasure by a few lines, I shall be ready to pay my respects to his Lordship, and give him all the verbal information in my power."

A severe return of ill health seems to have prevented Lord Clive from visiting the Spa, and, probably, from meeting Lord Rochford. But the continuation of unfavourable reports from India, and the approaching meeting of Parliament, made the Ministers more desirous than ever of some communication of opinions with him. The Solicitor-General accordingly wrote his Lordship the following letter: —

"My dear Lord,

"I have been confined to the house since my arrival in town, by a cold, till this morning, that I was obliged to go to Lord North's. As soon as the business which brought me to him was finished, he began upon the subject of the East Indies; to which, he said, the attention of Administration was now very seriously turned.

He seemed to feel strongly the necessity of taking some steps immediately for the preservation of so important an object, and the difficulty of forming any proper measure for that purpose. From the tenor of the conversation it appeared to me that no idea had as yet presented itself that could be the foundation of any plan; and he expressed the strongest wish to receive that instruction upon the subject which your Lordship alone can give him. I took it upon me to say that your Lordship had never given any Administration reason to think that you would decline doing that service to the public, but that you had never been called upon; nor had it ever appeared to be an object of real attention to Government. He seemed very desirous that I should acquaint you how much it was now become the object of their most earnest attention, and that it would give him the utmost satisfaction to be able to form his own ideas upon yours. I did not undertake the commission with so much frankness as I should have done, if it had been only to go from Downing Street to Berkeley Square; and this evening I received the enclosed letter, which I was desired to convey to your Lordship.

"From Lord North's I went to Lord Rochford, who took up the same subject, and, as his manner is, with more eagerness than the other.

He desired me to tell your Lordship, that he had employed himself in forming a *Précis* of the Indian affairs, which he wished to communicate to you; that he was convinced you thought alike with him as to the evils that now subsist, and that you knew, much better than he could, what were the proper remedies for them.

"I have related to you, as shortly as I could, the purport of two pretty long conversations, to which I can add very little of my own observation, having scarcely seen any body till this morning; except that I understand a great many plans are forming by different people upon this subject, which, it is generally supposed, must, in some manner, be taken up this winter. I heard of no specific proposition that had been mentioned to Government, in either of my conversations, except the old one of a Triennial Direction, which, to be sure, by itself, will not mend the matter very much. It is now certain, what you always supposed, that the Duc de Choiseuil had determined* to begin his attack in the East Indies, and the blow would have been struck at Bengal.

"It might seem odd if I omitted to say to your Lordship, upon the former part of my letter, that I am very much persuaded, both the

* This was when a rupture was expected between the Courts of St. James's and Versailles.

ministers I have seen, and particularly the last, will pursue any plan you point out. I have had other conversations with him formerly, upon the general state of Indian affairs, and his ideas seem to coincide very much with yours. Lord North seems to be quite open upon the subject, and as he has no prejudice to bias him, I should form the same conclusion with regard to him.

"Lincoln's Inn Fields,
29th Oct. 1771."

On the 14th of November Mr. Wedderburn writes to Lord Clive: "I delivered your Lordship's letter to L. N., who seemed to be extremely happy by the manner in which you received his application. From the inquiries which he made about your engagements in the country, I imagine he is very desirous of seeing you in town. But that matter rests more properly with him, and I only said I was very sure you would be very ill pleased to be brought up to no purpose. The other Lord is in the country this week, but returns on Monday next. I should conjecture that his ideas are more forward upon the affairs of the East than your correspondent's. I am told that the Directors have compromised the affair of the tea-duties with the Treasury; but they have not done me the honour to acquaint me upon what terms,

though in the outset of the business, I had some share in bringing about an agreement for the Company. There seems to be a good deal of ill-humour at present against the Directors, which they may feel the effects of, if the alarm at the present state of affairs in India is not quieted soon."

The party then in power among the Directors was hostile to Lord Clive, who for several years, chiefly by the weight of his personal influence, had excluded them from office. Mr. Sulivan, who was their leader, and some others, bore him the most rancorous personal animosity. It is not improbable that they had heard of the communication thus opened between Lord Clive and the Ministers, and that considering it as pregnant with consequences prejudicial to their own interests, they resolved to take some decided step to palsy the effects of his authority in the discussions that were approaching. Perhaps the slight paid to Mr. Wedderburn, and alluded to in the foregoing extract, may be traced to his intimacy with Lord Clive, or even to his supposed agency in bringing about a meeting with the Ministers.

However that may be, just a fortnight before the meeting of Parliament, Lord Clive, without having had any previous communication made to him on the part of the Directors, received a

dry official letter* from the Company's Secretary, informing him that the Court of Directors had lately received several papers containing charges respecting the management of the Company's affairs in Bengal, wherein his Lordship was made a party; enclosing copies of them, and acquainting his Lordship, that if he had any observations to make, the Court of Directors would be glad to receive them as expeditiously as might be convenient for his Lordship.

Lord Clive, on perusing these charges, which were anonymous, at once perceived the purpose for which they were thus seasonably made and communicated. In his answer, which he addressed to the Court of Directors, he remarks, — "You have not been pleased to inform me from whom you received these papers, to what end they were laid before you, what resolution you have come to concerning them, nor for what purpose you expect my observations upon them.

"I shall, however, observe to you, that upon the public records of the Company, where the whole of my conduct is stated, you may find a sufficient confutation of the charges which you have transmitted to me; and I cannot but suppose, that if any part of my conduct had been injurious to the service, contradictory to my en-

* Dated 7th January, 1772.

gagements with the Company, or even mysterious to you, four years and a half since my arrival in England would not have elapsed before your duty would have impelled you to call me to account."

The charges were those which he afterwards enumerated and repelled in his speech in the House of Commons on the 30th of March following.

The resolution of Ministers to call the public attention to Indian affairs was sufficiently indicated in the Speech from the Throne*, in which the affairs of the East India Company were plainly alluded to. "The concerns of this country," his Majesty was made to say, "are so various and extensive, as to require the most vigilant and active attention; and some of them, as well from remoteness of place as from other circumstances, are so peculiarly liable to abuses and exposed to danger, that the interposition of the Legislature for their protection may become necessary. If in any such instances, either for supplying defects or remedying abuses, you shall find it requisite to provide any new laws, you may depend upon my ready concurrence in whatever may best contribute to the attainment of these salutary ends." Mr. Vane, who seconded

* 21st January, 1772.

the Address in the House of Commons, insisted that the malversation of the East India Company's servants called loudly for interposition; that new laws and regulations were become necessary; that at present the Company had not sufficient powers over their servants to enforce obedience to their orders, or to prevent them from accumulating enormous fortunes at the expense of their masters; and that their exorbitancies in other respects might, in their consequences, occasion the entire loss of those distant dominions to Great Britain. The subject was not, however, immediately taken up by any Member, and some time passed without any further reference to that part of his Majesty's Speech.

But it was not dropped. On the 30th March, Mr. Sulivan, who was then Deputy Chairman of the Court of Directors, moved for leave to bring in a bill "for the better regulation of the affairs of the East India Company, and of their servants in India, and for the due administration of justice in Bengal." He said that the object of the bill was to restrain the Governor and Council from all trade; and to establish a proper mode of administering justice, by extending the authority of the Court of Justice at Calcutta over all Bengal. It was alleged by those who

supported the motion, that the bad state of our affairs in India was owing to the little power which the Court of Directors had to punish their servants, either for disobedience of orders, or for malpractices in the country; that the power of trading that had been granted to the Governors, when we had mere factories on the sea-coast, was no longer suitable to their duties, now that they were called upon to govern our wide and important dominions; that their interests and duties had become inconsistent; and that the system for the administration of public justice in Bengal was quite insufficient for its objects: and, in the course of the debates, many reflections were cast out, and charges made or insinuated, against former Governors of the country. On the other hand, it was contended that inquiry should precede legislation; that the House was not in possession of facts to guide it aright; that inquiry would probably show that the evils were too deep-seated to be remedied by the proposed bill; and, especially, that the Court of Directors, and the General Courts of Proprietors, were themselves much to blame for many of the evils complained of; that the sending out a few persons, learned in the laws of England, as judges, to such a country, was quite inadequate to the end in view; above

all, as it was not yet determined by what laws the inhabitants were to be governed.*

Many of the most important changes in the bill had long before been suggested by Lord Clive to the Company. But he disapproved of others of its details, and still more of the arguments by which it was supported. He had long been an object of attack and hostility to those by whom the bill was introduced. The late communication from the Court of Directors left him no doubts of their feelings; and, as he saw himself not obscurely aimed at, both in the motion and in the speeches in support of it, he took occasion to enter into a long justification of his conduct from the charges that had been recently brought against him. These charges were known to the public; and he wished to take the most public and solemn mode of answering them.

"It is with great diffidence," said he, "that I attempt to speak to this House; but I find myself so particularly called upon, that I must make the attempt, though I should expose myself in so doing. With what confidence can I venture to give my sentiments upon a subject of such national consequence, who myself stand charged with having been the cause of the

* Almon's Debates, for 1772, p. 360.; Annual Register, 1772.

present melancholy situation of the Company's affairs in Bengal? This House can have no reliance on my opinion, whilst such an impression remains unremoved. The House will, therefore, give me leave to remove this impression, and to endeavour to restore myself to that favourable opinion which, I flatter myself, they entertained of my conduct before these charges were exhibited against me. Nor do I wish to lay my conduct before the members of this House only; I speak, likewise, to my country in general, upon whom I put myself, not only without reluctance, but with alacrity."

After mentioning the critical and dangerous situation of the Company's affairs, when in 1764 he was called upon, by a General Court, to leave his family and the enjoyment of wealth and ease, to take upon himself the management of their affairs in a distant and unhealthy climate (an undertaking in which he engaged from a point of honour, and from a principle of gratitude), he observes, that on his arrival in Bengal he found his powers disputed by the Council; that in the discharge of his difficult duty three paths lay before him: the first, to take the government as he found it, and carry it on upon the same principles; by which he might have returned to England with an immense fortune, but condemned by justice and honour: the se-

cond, to have given up the commonwealth, and to have left Bengal without an effort to save it. "The third path," says he, "was intricate. Dangers and difficulties were on every side. But I resolved to pursue it. In short, I was determined to do my duty to the public, although I should incur the odium of the whole settlement. The welfare of the Company required a vigorous exertion, and I took the resolution of cleansing the Augean stable.

"It was this conduct," he exclaims, with truth and boldness, "which has occasioned the public papers to teem with scurrility and abuse against me, ever since my return to England. It was that conduct which occasioned these charges. It was that conduct which enables me now to lay my hand upon my heart, and most solemnly to declare to this House, to the gallery, and to the whole world at large, that I never, in a single instance, lost sight of what I thought the honour and true interest of my country and the Company; that I was never guilty of any acts of violence or oppression, unless the bringing offenders to justice can be deemed so; that as to extortion, such an idea never entered into my mind; that I did not suffer those under me to commit acts of violence, oppression, or extortion; that my influence was never employed for the advantage of any man, contrary to the

strictest principles of honour and justice; and that, so far from reaping any benefit myself from the expedition, I returned to England many thousand pounds out of pocket, — a fact of which this House will presently be convinced."

He then entered into a detail of the charges themselves, and of the strange way in which they had been communicated to him by the Directors. The charges, it appears, were four. The first was, a monopoly of cotton. "Trade," says he, "was not my profession. My line has been military and political. I owe all I have in the world to my having been at the head of an army; and as to cotton, I know no more about it than the Pope of Rome."

The second charge was for a monopoly of diamonds. He observes, that at that period there were only two ways by which a servant of the Company could, with propriety, remit his fortune to England; by bills on the Company, or by diamonds: that, in consequence of his own successful endeavours, the Company's treasury was so rich, that it did not receive money for such bills: that he, therefore, sent an agent into a distant and independent country to purchase diamonds, that he might be able to remit the amount of his jaghire. "These diamonds," says he, "were not sent home clandestinely. I caused them to be registered; I paid the duties

upon them; and these remittances, upon the whole, turned out 3 per cent. worse than bills of exchange upon the Company. This is all I know of a monopoly of diamonds."

The third charge was, frauds in the exchange, and in the gold coinage. This, he said, was a subject very much out of his sphere, as he was totally unacquainted with the proportion of alloy and the mixture of metals. That the Select Committee was apprehensive of the country being drained of silver, and, knowing that there was much gold in different quarters, hoped to make it circulate as coin. "Hence the establishment of the gold currency," he continues. "Whether it answered our purpose or not, I cannot say, as I did not remain in Bengal long enough to experience the effect of it; but this I know, that the assay and mint-master, by whose judgment we were guided, was a very able and a very honest man, and has, I understand, given a full and satisfactory explanation of his plan to the Court of Directors. With regard to myself, I shall only assert, that I did not receive a farthing advantage from it, and that I never sent a single rupee or gold mohur to be coined in my life.

"The fourth charge has this extraordinary title, 'A monopoly of salt, betle-nut, and tobacco, and other commodities, which occasioned the late famine.' How a monopoly of salt, betle-

nut, and tobacco, in the years 1765 and 1766, could occasion a want of rain and scarcity of rice in the year 1770, is past my comprehension. I confess I cannot answer that part of this article; and as to the *other commodities*, as they have not been specified, I cannot say any thing to them." He then entered into an explanation regarding the monopoly of salt, its origin, objects, and effects, and defended his conduct and that of the Select Committee in every circumstance, ascribing the opposition which their measures met with to ignorance, prejudice, and mistaken views. He contended that, in the circumstances of the country, it was the only fund left for adequately paying the higher servants; that it was faithfully and judiciously applied to that purpose; and that it was attended with no injury or increase of taxation to the people, who, by the plan of the society, were to receive it at as moderate a rate as they had ever done in former times. Finally, he showed that he had strictly conformed to a resolution made before leaving England,—not to return in any degree enriched by his expedition to India; and for that purpose had exhibited the state of his whole receipts as Governor, including his share in the Society of Trade, as well as his expenditure; by which it appeared, that of the proceeds one portion was divided among Mr. Maskelyne, Mr. Strachey,

and Mr. Ingham, three gentlemen who had accompanied him to India, the two latter his private secretary and family surgeon; and all the residue applied in part payment of his necessary expenses as Governor; and that, so far from returning home with any pecuniary benefits, he had really incurred a loss of 5,816*l.* 16*s.* 9*d.*

As insinuations had been used regarding his conduct in acquiring the property which he had devoted to establish a fund for relief of the Company's disabled officers and soldiers, and their widows,—a subject which, he remarks, he would have been ashamed to touch on, as carrying with it an appearance of vanity, were not his honour and reputation so much at stake,—he proceeded to show, that, by the opinions of the first lawyers in England, and, among others, of the Speaker of the House, his acceptance of the legacy of Meer Jaffier in no respect interfered with any of his covenants or engagements; that the amount was his own sole and indisputable property; and that the Court of Directors acknowledged, confirmed, and acted upon that right: in short, that the donation which he had made for improving the Company's military service, so far from being an object of blame, was a free gift of upwards of 70,000*l.* out of his private purse.

Having thus triumphantly concluded his de-

fence against the charges that referred more immediately to himself, he expressed a fear of encroaching on the patience of the House, in what he had to say on the important business more immediately before them; but was loudly called upon to go on. He then took a view of the general accusations brought against the Company's servants; accusations in which the Court of Directors had loudly joined. The justice of many of these he did not deny, but argued that the offences arose in general less from the characters of the individuals, to which they had been ascribed, than from the unfortunate circumstances of their situation, which exposed them to temptations that it was nearly impossible for human nature to resist: that a change of system was the remedy, and that that must proceed from the Court of Directors and the Government: that in the richest country in the world, where the power of the English had become absolute, where no inferior approached his superior but with a present in his hand, where there was not an officer commanding his Majesty's fleet, nor an officer commanding his Majesty's army, nor a Governor, nor a member of Council, nor any other person, civil or military, in such a station as to have connection with the country Government, who had not received presents, it was not to be expected that

the inferior officers should be more scrupulous. The abuses to which, in a country containing fifteen millions of inhabitants, a revenue of 4,000,000*l.*, and trade in proportion, such a practice gave rise, he described in the liveliest terms; as well as the artifices by which the wily native gradually draws on the inexperienced and unthinking youth, on his first arrival in the country, till he gets him in his power: and to the natives, protected by such men, he ascribes the acts of violence and oppression that had been committed; not to the masters, who were for the most part ignorant of them. He reminded the House that as to the conduct of these young men, on whom the Directors were desirous of shifting the blame, neither their parents nor the Directors themselves were guiltless. "The advantages arising from the Company's service," said he, "are now very generally known, and the great object of every man is to get his son appointed a writer to Bengal, which is usually at the age of sixteen. His parents and relations represent to him how certain he is of making a fortune; that my Lord Such-a-one and my Lord Such-a-one acquired so much money in such a time, and Mr. Such-a-one and Mr. Such-a-one so much in such a time. Thus are their principles corrupted at their very setting out; and, as they generally go a good many

together, they inflame one another's expectations to such a degree, in the course of the voyage, that they fix upon a period for their return, before their arrival." After describing the career of luxury and extravagance into which they are seduced by their artful banyan *, who takes advantage of the influence he acquires to commit acts of violence and oppression, he adds, "Hence Sir, arises the clamour against the English gentlemen in India. But look at them in a retired situation, when returned to England, when they are no longer nabobs and sovereigns of the East: see if there be any thing tyrannical in their dispositions towards their inferiors; see if they are not good and humane masters. Are they not charitable? Are they not benevolent? Are they not generous? Are they not hospitable? If they are, thus far, not contemptible members of society, and if in all their dealings between man and man their conduct is strictly honourable, ..... may we not conclude, that if they have erred, it has been because they were men placed in situations subject to little or no control? .....

"But if the servants of the Company are to be loaded with the demerit of every misfortune in India, let them also have the merit they are entitled to. The Court of Directors, surely, will not claim the merit of those advantages which

* A native trader, and agent.

the nation and the Company are at present in possession of. The officers of the navy and army have had great share in the execution; but the Company's servants were the Cabinet Council who planned every thing, and to them also may be ascribed some part of the merit of our great acquisitions."

After having shown that the system was more to blame than the men, that much of the defect of regulation and control which rendered abuses inevitable in India was owing to the very persons who were loudest in their complaints, he next turned the attention of the House to the state of India itself; a country which, he affirmed, yielded a clear produce to the public and to individuals of between two and three millions sterling per annum. He asked what could be substituted for this, were it lost; and pointed to the dangers it actually ran, during a recent difference with the French Court. But it was certain, that our affairs in Bengal were in a very deplorable condition. This he ascribed to mismanagement. The public trade he showed, from official returns, to have more than doubled since the acquisition of the dewannee; while the inland trade, upon which the happiness and prosperity of the people must chiefly depend, had, by a change of system, and under pretence of freedom of trade, been thrown into total confusion, as the Company's

servants and their agents had in reality taken it into their own hands, and, by trading not only as merchants but as sovereigns, had taken the bread out of the mouth of thousands of native merchants, whom they reduced to beggary. By official returns he proved that, since the acquisition of the dewannee, the revenues had suffered but a very inconsiderable decrease; while in every year since he left Bengal there had been a rapid increase in the military and civil charges, which threatened to consume the whole of the collections, and leave no surplus whatever. "Here," says he truly, "lies the danger. The evil is not so much in the revenues falling short, as in the expenses increasing. The best means of raising the revenues is to reduce the civil and military charges..... It is not the simple pay of officers and men upon the civil and military establishment which occasions our enormous expense, but the contingent bills of contractors, commissaries, engineers, &c., out of which, I am sure, great savings might be made..... Every man now, who is permitted to make a bill, makes a fortune. These intolerable expenses have alarmed the Directors, and persuaded them to come to Parliament for assistance. And, if I mistake not, they will soon go to the Administration and tell them they cannot pay the 400,000*l.*, and that they must lower the dividends to the Proprietors."

The distressed state of the Company's affairs he attributed to four causes: —a relaxation of Government in his successors; great neglect on the part of his Majesty's Administration; notorious misconduct on the part of the Directors; and the violent and outrageous proceedings of General Courts, including contested elections.

While he bestowed the highest and most merited praise or Mr. Verelst's honour, worth, and disinterestedness, he asserts that the too great tenderness of his disposition had made him govern with too lenient a hand; that he himself, by his farewell letter to the Select Committee, had done all in his power to guard him against this error, and to prompt him to vigorous measures. But he adds, that had his successor kept the tightest rein, he could not have done much service to the Company, as neither he nor any man could have long guarded against the mischiefs occasioned by the Directors themselves, when they took away the powers of the Select Committee.

Nor was the Administration itself free from blame. When the Company had acquired an empire more extensive than any kingdom in Europe, France and Russia excepted, with 4,000,000*l.* of gross revenue, and trade in proportion, it might have been expected that such acquisitions would have invited the most serious

attention of Ministers, and that some plan would have been devised, in concert with the Court of Directors, adequate to the occasion. Did they take it into consideration? "No, they did not." — "They thought of nothing but the present time, regardless of the future; they said, 'Let us get what we can to-day; let to-morrow take care for itself:' they thought of nothing but the immediate division of the loaves and fishes: nay, so anxious were they to lay their hands upon some immediate advantage, that they actually went so far as to influence a parcel of temporary proprietors to bully the Directors into their terms. It was their duty, Sir, to have called upon the Directors for a plan; and if a plan in consequence had not been laid before them, it would then have become their duty, with the aid and assistance of Parliament, to have formed one themselves. If Administration had done their duty, we should not now have had a speech from the throne intimating the necessity of Parliamentary interposition, to save our possessions in India from impending ruin."

He next proceeded to animadvert on the misconduct of the Directors, who after having, in the highest terms, applauded the conduct of the Select Committee, who had extricated their affairs from anarchy and confusion, and raised them to a degree of prosperity never before enjoyed nor

anticipated, had counteracted the beneficial effects of their exertions by dropping the prosecutions against those gentlemen whose conduct the Committee had censured: that from that instant they destroyed their own power; their servants abroad looked upon all covenants as so many sheets of blank paper; and then began that relaxation of Government so much complained of, and so much to be dreaded. That this step they followed up by destroying the powers of the Committee, by dividing them between the Committee and Council. The natural consequence was an uninterrupted series of disputes, to the detriment of the service. That not content with this, the Court restored almost every civil and military transgressor who had been dismissed. "And now," continued his Lordship, "as a condemnation of their own conduct, and a tacit confession of their own weakness, they come to Parliament with a bill of regulations, in which is inserted a clause to put such practices as much as possible out of their power for the future."

He lastly censured the violent proceedings of General Courts, as concurring with the acts of the Directors, in removing all dread of responsibility from their servants abroad. He argued, that the whole of these evils were aggravated by the system of annual elections; that one half of

the year was employed by the Directors in freeing themselves from the obligations contracted by their last election; and the second half wasted in incurring new obligations, and securing their election for the next year, by daily sacrifices of some interest of the Company. The orders sent out had, in consequence of the unsettled state of the Direction, been so fluctuating, that the servants (who say the truth have generally understood the interest of the Company much better than the Directors,) in many instances followed their own opinion, in opposition to theirs.

He concluded a speech of singular power and intelligence by observing, that it was not his intention to trouble the House, at that time, with the remedies for these evils. He chose rather to defer them till the bill came into the House.*

He was followed by Governor Johnstone, who opposed the bill on the reasonable ground that an examination of facts should precede legislation, and that it was necessary to hear evidence before forming any conclusion on subjects so important. He entered into an examination of the defence which Lord Clive had just made of

* Lord Clive's speech is given in Almon's Debates, and was published separately.

his conduct. In regard to the two first charges, he acknowledged that they originated in the clumsy manner in which business was done at the India House; that the first was meant to be confined to particular members of the Council; and that the second was not meant as a charge, but as illustrating another point. He contended, however, in vehement terms, that in regard to the fourth charge, that of the Salt Company, his Lordship had violated his duty, and disobeyed the strong and repeated orders of the Court of Directors, and that the monopoly had been attended with the most injurious consequences to the country; that as to the proportion of the profits which came to him as Governor, it was no excuse for receiving them to allege, that they had been distributed among his friends and dependants. In regard to the gold coinage, he urged that it was not enough that Lord Clive had derived no benefit from it (though indeed, as Governor, he had received a per centage on the coinage); that it was a duty of his station to become acquainted with principles so important to the prosperity of those he governed; that his receipt of the per centage of one and an eighth on the revenues, in lieu of the advantages resulting from his share in the Society of Trade, however sanctioned by the Directors, was illegal. He next attacked the legacy of Meer Jaffier,

the basis of the celebrated bounty, and declared his opinion that the foundation of the large establishments and increased expenditure which, since Lord Clive left India, had brought the Company's affairs to the verge of ruin, had been laid during his government, and under his advice. Nearly the whole of the speech was an attack on Lord Clive, on the same subjects, and conveyed in the same violent language to which he had already so often given vent during the contests in the Court of Proprietors.*

Leave was given to introduce the bill.

Nearly three months had elapsed since the allusion to India in the Royal Speech, and Ministers, during that time, had shown no disposition to take the matter into their own hands, as such a reference seemed to promise. They were not prepared for a measure of such importance, embarrassed, as they were, with other nearer business. By the allusions in the speech, they, perhaps, wished to show that they had not lost sight of a subject which occupied so much of the public attention; but, with nothing to propose, were willing to let it lie over till it received its first impulse from some other quarter. This impulse it very soon did receive.

On the day of bringing in Mr. Sulivan's bill†,

* Almon's Debates. † 13th April.

Colonel Burgoyne made a motion, that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the nature, state, and condition of the East India Company, and of the British affairs in the East Indies. Burgoyne was a man not without talent, of showy parts, bold, vain, well-meaning, a political adventurer. He was not connected with the Ministry, but thought the opportunity a favourable one to bring himself into notice, by taking the lead in a question of great national consequence. In his speech introducing the motion, he represented, with much judgment, the inconsistency of giving a vote on the bill which was that day to be presented, without first examining the state of the country to which it referred; and that no facts were before the House to enable it to come to a sound judgment: he professed perfect impartiality and independence of all parties, and disavowed any hostility to the Company or its servants: he disclaimed all wish to throw the Company's affairs into the hands of the Crown; but argued that facts sufficiently notorious had occurred to justify and demand an inquiry into the rights of the Company, and the mode in which they had been exercised, especially as the fate of fifteen millions of people was involved in the question. It was objected to his motion, that the proceedings of a Select Committee being private, there

was little responsibility on its members; that such a Committee would virtually be really a Government nomination; that no plan was yet before the House, and that, therefore, the inquiries of such a Committee must necessarily be vague and indefinite, such as the House could not limit or control. The motion, was, however, carried without a division; and the members, thirty-one in number, appointed by ballot, with directions, as the session was far spent, to sit during the summer. Mr. Sulivan's bill was dropped after the second reading.

When the Committee met, Colonel Burgoyne, who had proposed it, was chosen Chairman. It was expected that he would have proposed a plan; but having none to offer, Governor Johnstone, who was a member, and who saw all the advantages of attack which such a Committee afforded him, addressed the Committee, and submitted to them one which, from different motives, was agreed to by all. By some (says Mr. Strachey, himself a member of the Committee) it was readily adopted, because they saw that it tended to an inquiry into the conduct of individuals who had amassed great wealth in India, and particularly of Lord Clive, whose high reputation, as well as riches, had rendered him the most exalted object of envy. By Lord Clive himself, who was also a member of the Com-

mittee, the plan was readily adopted, because it was not fitting for him to oppose an inquiry into a conduct that had been so long the subject of ill-grounded invective. By the few personal friends of his Lordship it was readily adopted, because they were convinced that his character would receive additional lustre from the scrutiny, and that the attack levelled at his fame would tend only to establish his reputation in the minds of all mankind. Others acquiesced in it, because some plan was necessary, and it was the only one proposed.

It was not long before the hostile feelings of several members of the Committee to Lord Clive became manifest. The order originally proposed was soon departed from, and the inquiry pointedly turned against him, with many symptoms of personal animosity. The first and second reports,—the former containing examinations of witnesses, regarding the circumstances attending the revolutions of 1757 and 1760, the presents then given, and the grant of Lord Clive's jaghire,—the latter relating to the grievances connected with the inland trade in the time of Mr. Verelst,—were hurried on, and presented on the 26th of May following, just before the rising of the session, and printed in the Journals of the House.

Governor Johnstone took a leading part in

their proceedings, and his views gave a particular turn to their labours, and that by no means favourable to Lord Clive. His plan seemed to be to show, that it had long been the custom to receive presents in India; that large presents had been received by Lord Clive, at the revolution in 1757, and by Mr. Vansittart and others in that of 1760; and that, therefore, the sums received by his brother, Mr. John Johnstone, on the accession of the young prince in 1765, stood on equally good grounds. The argument was, in one respect, at least, defective; for while, in the first instances, there existed no prohibition against receiving presents, in the last case, the Council had lying before them, covenants with the Company expressly restraining them from the receipt of presents, which covenants they had put aside, to avail themselves of the opportunity afforded by their own wrong, of enriching themselves by illicit advantages.

The publication of these examinations, of course, increased the ferment, which had begun to prevail on the subject of Indian affairs, and they were much talked of and discussed during the recess of Parliament that followed. Things had long been retrograding in India. So far back as May, 1769, the disastrous news from Madras, of Hyder's success, had produced a fall of 60 per cent. in the price of India stock. This

the Directors had treated as an evil speedily to be removed. But that event was closely followed by news of a famine in Bengal in the following year; while trade declined, difficulties of every kind increased, and the debt of Calcutta was rapidly rising. Still, however, the Directors went on, in hopes of a favourable change, and from year to year, while their means diminished, the rate of dividend was increased; till, in 1770, it had reached 12 per cent. The extent of the bills from Bengal had excited alarm even then; but in the face of them, the Directors, at the first quarterly court in 1771, communicated their opinion, that the dividend should be raised a quarter per cent. for the ensuing half year; thus completing the 12½ per cent., the highest annual dividend that by the act was allowed to be drawn in the most prosperous circumstances. Their return to power they had owed to the assistance of the party which demanded a rise of dividend, and they were resolved to retain its support by a perseverance in their favourite object. Lord Clive had opposed the whole course of conduct of the Directors, their contract with Government, and the system which they pursued, both at home and abroad; though with little other effect than that of drawing on himself their active hostility. The inquiries in Parliament, however, had

weakened the power of the Directors. The state of the Company's affairs could not now be permanently concealed. They found difficulties thickening around them. They were divided among themselves. Their expenses abroad threatened, not only to swallow up all the revenue of the country, but to burden them in both countries with an intolerable load of debt. By their recent engagements with Government they had given ministers a right to interfere in their concerns, and, in fact, placed themselves in their power. They contrived, however, to procrastinate, and to avoid any crisis, until the Parliament had risen.

A few days after the session was concluded*, a grand installation of the Knights of the Bath took place†, when Lord Clive was installed as a knight of the order, having been appointed several years before. In September the same year, upon the death of the Earl of Powis, lord-lieutenant of the county of Salop, he considered himself, from the extent of his property in the county, and the importance of his public services, as entitled to succeed him in the office. At the same time he felt some difficulty, being resolved that, situated as matters were, he would ask nothing of Ministers that could subject him to the appearance of courting their favour. Some

* 10th June. † 15th June.

BENGAL SECRETARIAT LIBRARY



of his friends advised him at once to ask a private audience of His Majesty, and to explain his claims without intervention. But this his good sense forbade; for Ministers, if they had not encouraged, had at least shown no disapprobation of the personal manner in which the proceedings of the Select Committee had been directed; and he justly considered it as dangerous to run the risk of making his Sovereign and the Ministers, who, at this period, had gained a decided ascendency over all the different parties in the country, his declared enemies. "I cannot be of your opinion," says he, writing on this subject to his friend Mr. Strachey*, "because I think that things are not yet ripe for an open rupture. Until my conduct in Parliament is decided upon, I do not desire the King and his Ministers to be my declared enemies. In such a situation I should certainly not meet with much applause from the House for my conduct in the East Indies; and I wish at least that the members of the House, when they come to decide, may have no other motive for an unfavourable decision but envy; that, indeed, is too strongly implanted in the human breast to be removed." It soon appeared, however, that Lord Rochford had mentioned his name to his Majesty, who received it favourably; and a friend writes him that he

* Walcot, 20th September, 1772.

believes that Lord North had really formed no plan on the subject (as Lord Clive seems to have apprehended), and would be very happy to have an opportunity of offering him the lieutenancy. "If it appears," says his friend, "that success is clear, you will only have to take the steps which the decorums of bestowing favours require; princes and ladies never are supposed to offer, but to grant, their favours, and expect to be asked what they have determined to give." Lord Clive, in conclusion, writes to Mr. Strachey; "I expect W. here in a day or two; and if he brings me a favourable account, I shall lose no time in going to town and demanding a private audience, that I may explain myself fully to his Majesty. I will not receive the lieutenancy through the channel of a minister." In this resolution, the result of a natural feeling of resentment, he probably relaxed; and his nomination of course took place, at least formally, on the recommendation of Lord North. Writing, on the 9th of October, to Mr. Strachey, he says, "Dear Strachey, I have the pleasure to inform you that I kissed the King's hand to-day, upon being appointed Lieutenant of the county of Salop. Afterwards I had a private audience, when I pushed the matter ably and well, to that degree as I could perceive the King was very much affected. The answer was favourable, but

not determined; but I think it would be imprudent to treat more on the subject in a letter, and must therefore defer farther explanation until I have the pleasure of seeing you. The King talked upon Indian affairs for near half an hour; and I had an opportunity of mentioning your services and abilities."

He had also an interview with Lord North; and that amiable man and good-natured minister seems to have succeeded in appeasing, to a certain degree, his irritated feelings. "Lord North," says he*, "when I saw him, seemed industriously to avoid entering upon the subject of India affairs; and I do verily believe, from sheer indolence of temper, he wishes to leave every thing to Providence and the Directors; and that he means nothing more by the meeting of Parliament†, than to enable the Company to find money to discharge the demands that are at present made upon them. However, it behoves me to be prepared for every thing; for which purpose, you will perhaps say, I have been building castles in the air. Enclosed I send you a sketch of my ideas, which, I flatter myself, might be carried into execution by an able,

* Letter to Mr. Strachey, dated Walcot, 7th November, 1772.

† The Parliament had been summoned to meet before the Christmas holidays, for the despatch of business.

steady, and upright minister. I don't wish to take you from your other business unnecessarily, but I wish you would take this sketch in hand, and methodise it. I would have you dwell fully and strongly upon the present situation of our affairs in India, and show, beyond a possibility of refutation, the approaching ruin of our possessions in the East, if vigorous measures be not speedily pursued. Your own experience and knowledge, added to my sentiments, expressed both in my speech and in the political paper laid before Lord North, will enable you to make a great progress in this matter; and upon my arrival in town what is wanting may be supplied. I will not patiently stand by, and see a great empire, acquired by great abilities, perseverance, and resolution, lost by ignorance and indolence. If Administration should think proper to see our affairs abroad in the same light as I do, '*tis well.* If not, I shall have done my duty. Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat, may with a vengeance be applied to the Court of Directors appointing M(onckton) and five of their own body Supervisors. Private letters from India give a most dreadful account of the luxury, dissipation, and extravagance of Bengal."

It should seem that the plan here mentioned was afterwards prepared and presented to Lord North. It is dated the 24th of November, two

days before the opening of Parliament. It embraces the whole system of Indian Government at home and abroad, and must have been a valuable contribution* at a moment when Parliament was called, for the express purpose of considering the state of the Company's concerns.

In December, the same year, he was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Montgomeryshire.

Meanwhile, the Parliament had hardly risen for the summer, when the difficulties in the Company's affairs which have been alluded to, became too great to be concealed. Though the Directors had long suffered inconvenience from the want of funds, the first unsurmountable difficulty in the means of discharging the demands on them was said to be observed by their cashier in the beginning of July, 1772. This he communicated to Mr. Sulivan; a Committee of Treasury was called, and there was laid before them an estimate of the probable receipts and payments for the months of July, August, September, and October, when it appeared that they could command only 954,200*l.*, to meet demands amounting to 2,247,200*l.*, leaving a deficiency of 1,293,000*l.* On the 15th of July it was resolved to apply to the Bank for a loan of

* An abstract of it may be found in the Historical View of Plans for the Government of British India, Lond. 1793, 4to., pp. 55—70.

400,000*l.* for two months, which was granted; and, on the 29th of July, a further loan of 300,000*l.* was asked, but only 200,000*l.* received. At a Committee of Treasury, held on the 11th of August 1772, the Chairman and Deputy Chairman acquainted the Members, that they had waited on Lord North to present to his Lordship the state of the Company's affairs, and had represented that the sum of near 1,000,000*l.* sterling would be necessary to be borrowed to carry on the circulation of the Company's affairs, and that of this million about 500,000*l.* would be left undischarged in the month of March following, when the whole produce of the September sale would probably be received.* The first Lord of the Treasury is said to have received their proposals with dryness and reserve, and referred them to Parliament for satisfaction. They had once more recourse to the plan of appointing supervisors, with full powers for the regulation of their affairs abroad; and after various delays, six gentlemen † were named,

* Seventh Report of the Committee of Secresy, 1773, pp. 51, 52. The historical articles of the Annual Register for 1772 and 1773 are ably written, and show a great acquaintance with Indian affairs and the feelings of parties. Mill's History gives a good abstract of these proceedings.

† Lieutenant-General the Hon. —— Monckton; George Cuming, Wm. Devaynes, Peter Lascelles, Daniel Wier, and Edward Wheler, Esquires.

who agreed to accept the difficult and invidious office.

Ministers, in these circumstances, and when called upon to sanction a loan of such an amount, could not avoid taking a direct share in the affairs of the Company. The Parliament was called before the holidays, for the express purpose of adopting some efficient measures to recover their affairs from the confusion into which they had fallen. His Majesty, in his speech from the throne, on the 26th of November, observed, "When I received information of the difficulties in which the Company appears to be involved, I determined to give you an early opportunity of informing yourselves fully of the true state of their affairs, and of making such provisions for the common benefit and security of all the various interests concerned as you shall find best adapted to the exigencies of the case."

The necessity of some remedy was sufficiently plain; but there was a deficiency of knowledge and of facts. The Minister now clearly perceived, from the line of inquiry into which the Select Committee had deviated, and the temper of some of the members, that their labours, whatever other effects they might have, were not likely to afford such information as would enable Parliament, in the present exigency, to regulate or even to understand the Company's

affairs. Lord North, the same day on which the Address was voted, after adverting to the distressed situation of the Company, a distress which he ascribed chiefly to the complicated union of civil and political power with their commercial affairs, expressed his conviction that, embarrassed as they were for the moment, they were still in full health, and, with a temporary assistance, fully able to meet and discharge all their engagements; that, by the measure which he had to propose, their secret and confidential transactions would be known but to a few, so that no unfair advantage could be taken. He concluded by moving that, for the better ascertaining the real condition of the Company's affairs, a Committee of Secresy be appointed to inquire into the state of the East India Company; and for that purpose to inspect the books and accounts of the said Company, and to report to the House what they find material therein, in respect to the debts, credits, and effects of the Company; as also to the management and present situation of the Company's affairs, together with their observations thereupon. It was also referred to them to report their opinion of the steps taken by the Company of sending out Supervisors.

In the debate that ensued, Colonel Burgoyne thought it necessary to vindicate the late Com-

mittee from the aspersions which he imagined had been thrown on it by insinuations that the present embarrassed state of the Company's affairs was in any degree to be attributed to the mode of inquiry that it had adopted: he expatiated largely on what the Committee had done, and with much warmth affirmed, from his own knowledge, that their inquiries would disclose such a scene of iniquity, rapine, and injustice, such unheard-of cruelties, such violations of every rule of morality, religion, and good government, as were never before discovered; that in the whole investigation he could not find a sound spot whereon to lay his finger, it being all one mass of the most unheard-of villanies, and the most notorious corruption. That, if the proposed Committee was intended to supersede former inquiry, he could look upon it in no other light than a design to protect the guilty, and serve the purpose of stockjobbing. Lord North said, that he did not mean to impede the revival of the Select Committee. His motion was agreed to, and a Committee of thirteen appointed. The Select Committee of last year was also continued.

In a few days the new appointed Secret Committee, in consequence of the reference made to them, gave in a Special Report, recommending that a Bill should be brought in to restrain the

Company, for a limited time, from sending out Supervisors. The rapidity with which this recommendation was produced, drew from Mr. Burke the observation, that "Ministers, finding that the Select Committee of last year, a lawful wife publicly avowed, was barren, and had produced nothing, had taken a neat little snug one, which they called a Secret Committee, and that this was her first-born. Indeed," added he, "from the singular expedition of this extraordinary delivery, I am apt to think she was pregnant before wedlock." The Bill, when introduced, was violently opposed, as oppressive and unconstitutional; and supported on the grounds of the mixed nature of the Company, which was not merely a trading corporation, but a political body, an union of the merchant and magistrate; and that the appointment of Supervisors was really an interference with the Parliament, which was busily engaged in investigating the abuses, that the commission professed to be intended to correct. The East India Company were heard against it by Counsel. Mr. Burke opposed the Bill with his usual exuberance of reason and wit: he said, that the arguments of the Counsel must have left conviction on the mind of every gentleman who retained the least regard to national faith. He ridiculed the inefficiency of the two Committees then sitting. "One (the

Select Committee) has been so slow in their motions, that the Company have given up, long since, all hopes of redress from them; and the other, (the Secret) has gone on altogether so rapidly, that they do not know where they will stop. Like the fly of a jack, the latter has gone, hey-go-mad! the other, like the ponderous lead at the other end; and in that manner, Sir, have roasted the East India Company." He charged the Minister with supineness, who, though himself the cause of the ruin of the Company, had done nothing, but came to the House to ask them to do what was his business. That, in 1767, an inquiry into the affairs of the Company was set on foot; that Parliament sat day after day for forty-one days, and broke up without doing any thing at all. "It was near about that period," he continued, "that a discovery was made that the India Company had obtained an acquisition of great wealth. It seems, Sir, that a lady of great fortune in India, who had been ungenerously dealt with by her stewards, was unlucky enough to engage the attention of Parliament, who, perhaps envious of the booty being divided without their having any share, paid their addresses to the lady, but whether to her person or fortune you must determine; for, Sir, they were very eager to embrace her; they pretended to rescue her from the rapacity of her

stewards, yet, as soon as they touched the very good fortune of 400,000*l.* per annum, they left the lady to destruction. In this manner, Sir, the last Parliament acted; and, after pretending to redress the grievances of the Company, got up, after forty-one days' painful and laborious sitting, without coming to any conclusion at all. What has the Select Committee of this Parliament been, but a mock inquiry?" Sir William Meredith, who was a Member of that Committee, retorted Mr. Burke's comparison not unhappily. "He compares the two Committees," said he, "to a jack; the Secret one is like the flier of a jack, the other like the weight. I agree with him in the simile, but draw a very different conclusion. Sir, between the heavy ponderous weight at one end, and the quick motion of the flier, the dish is prepared, and rendered fit for digestion." In the course of the debate, Lord Clive observed, "I will trespass upon the indulgence of the House but a few moments. I am sorry, Sir, to find the India Company contending with Parliament, because, whenever their rights to territorial possessions are examined into, they will be disputed, and the Crown become the actual possessor of them. No man, Sir, has been more liberally rewarded by the Company than I have been; and though the learned sages of the law have very ably argued

the cause of their clients, yet, Sir, I feel myself influenced by motives which they cannot feel, gratitude and interest; and Sir, if ever I should be forgetful of the one, which God forbid, the other would teach me to attend to the affairs of the Company. Sir, I consider the interests of the nation and the Company as inseparable; and, with respect to the Supervisors, I was and continue to be against it; but at the same time, I consider this Bill as an exertion, indeed, of parliamentary authority, yet extremely necessary; and I could wish that the Company had met this House half way, instead of petitioning, and quarrelling with the mouth that is to feed them. With respect to the gentlemen nominated for the supervision, they are themselves the best judges, whether their abilities and integrity are equal to the important service in which they were to engage. Had they, Sir, known the East Indies as well as I do, they would shudder at the bare idea of such a perplexing and difficult service. The most rigid integrity, with the greatest disinterestedness, — the greatest abilities with resolution and perseverance, — must be united in the man or men who undertake to reform the accumulating evils which exist in Bengal, and which threaten to involve the nation and the Company in one

common ruin." The Bill was carried by a large majority, and finally passed both Houses.

It would seem as if the Court of Directors had resolved, that whenever their affairs came before Parliament, they should, as far as depended on them, contrive to find Lord Clive employment in his private concerns. When the bill of last session was to be proposed, certain heavy charges had been brought up against him, and hung out as a terror. When the present session was about to open, and much attention expected to be paid to Indian affairs, Lord Clive, on the 4th November, received an intimation from the Court of Directors, that they had taken the opinions of counsel relative to the loss sustained by the Company from the payment of the balances due to the renters of salt-pans in Bengal, out of their treasury; the commission received by him upon the revenues of Bengal, after his departure thence; and the interest due on sums paid for duties on salt, betle-nut, and tobacco; and were advised that he, and the rest of the gentlemen concerned in the payment of these balances, were liable to make good the same; that they were accountable for interest on the duties on salt, &c., and that his Lordship was not entitled to the commission on the revenues; and therefore calling upon him to make good those demands, but expressing an earnest

wish for an amicable adjustment, to save the expense and disagreeable circumstances of a suit in equity. After many delays in procuring even a statement of the amount of the demands thus intended to be made on him, his Lordship agreed to refer the whole to arbitrators, as they desired, and named on his side Mr. Madocks, an eminent counsel; when the Directors insisted that the referees should be merchant arbitrators; Lord Clive, with every appearance of reason, contended that the differences between them consisted of questions of law and government; and that, had they been commercial, a lawyer was not an improper arbitrator: in short, that they were receding from their own proposal; which gave reason to suspect that what they had in view was, not a decision, but a lawsuit. His Lordship judged correctly, for the Directors ordered a suit to be instituted.*

Early in the year 1773, the Court of Directors, seeing the Company's concerns more and more burthened on every side, and having no means of answering the demands upon them, were compelled to apply to Government for a loan of 1,500,000*l.*, for four years. This measure placed them, if possible, more completely than ever in the hands of the Ministry; and the Parliament, for the next four months, was en-

* 2d February, 1773.

tirely occupied with a series of motions, reports, and petitions, connected with their affairs. The debates of that period, which are very important, belong rather to the history of the East India Company and of the times, than to the Memoirs of Lord Clive. In the line of his politics being decidedly opposed to the measures of the Directors, which he considered as fatal to the prosperity of the Company, and being of opinion that their territorial acquisitions must be held as being acquired for the State, he generally voted with the Minister, but without joining his party.

It was in the course of this important session that a desperate blow was aimed at Lord Clive's honour and fortune. India affairs, though not in general very popular, or much attended to, engaged, at that time, a large share of the public attention. Violent discussions were going on in the Court of Proprietors, and in the Court of Directors, which were not only at war with each other, but divided within themselves: the East India Company complained loudly of the Ministry, which did not fail to recriminate; two Parliamentary Committees (the Select Committee, and the Committee of Secresy,) were sitting at the same time on the Company's affairs, and often occupied with nearly the same questions; petitions from the Company, the City of Lon-

don, and the Proprietors, were daily presented to Parliament on Indian affairs; the events of the preceding fifteen years were reviewed, and brought before the public, by men influenced by every sentiment of public good and personal animosity; and many were violently agitated by all the passions that the love of gain, the fear of ruin, ambition, honour, public spirit, or private malevolence, can put in motion.

When, in this general turmoil, the acts of almost every man who had filled any conspicuous situation in India were passed in review, and commented on with all the virulence of party spirit, it is not to be imagined that one who had acted so eminent a part in the events of the East, and who had taken so active a share in those at home, as Lord Clive had done, should escape without reproach. No man, from his situation, had made more enemies; and they were not only powerful and rich, but able and persevering. The combined force of so many passions in angry commotion, and seeking for vent in one direction or another, seemed all at once to be turned against him. It appeared as if he were singled out as the political scape-goat of Indian criminality, to bear the crimes of others as well as his own faults.

The first attack came from the Select Committee, which had directed its attention much

more to inquiries into particular historical facts, and charges of a personal nature, than to those general views which could enable Parliament, situated as it was, and pressed by the exigencies and clamours of a sinking Company, to legislate speedily, and with proper information. Lord Clive, in a letter of the 25th March, 1773, to General Wedderburn (the brother of the Solicitor-General), who then commanded at Bombay, and who, in the November following, fell at the siege of Broach, universally beloved and lamented, gives his opinion of the situation of affairs, and of the proceedings of the Committees, as they appeared to him, while things were still going on and unconcluded. "I know not what to say," he observes, "in my defence, for having thus long neglected to answer your several letters, so full in themselves of matter and of the situation of affairs, both at Bombay and upon the Continent. The real truth is, that the Parliamentary appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the state, nature, and condition of the Company's affairs, and which hitherto hath been chiefly an inquiry into the conduct of your very humble servant, took up so much of my time and attention that I could not bring myself to think upon any other subject. This session the inquiry has been resumed by another Committee, called the Secret Committee, with

much more serious attention, and with much greater abilities; so that I think a remedy may at last be applied to the many increasing evils in every part of India, if Government will stand forth, and do what they ought to do upon the occasion. No man is more capable than your brother of communicating to you what is at present in agitation, and what are most likely to be the consequences. For my part, I have ever been of opinion that all reformation abroad, until a thorough reformation takes place at home, can only be temporary, and must in the end prove futile. If we cannot have an able, honest, and independent Court of Directors at home, and a Governor and Council-General abroad of the same stamp, there is no salvation for the Company, and we shall at last be drove to the dreadful alternative of either seeing the whole of our possessions fall into the hands of Government, or of our inveterate enemies the French; and if the Proprietors have not virtue enough among them to make a proper choice, Parliament must do it for them; and I hope the choice will be such as may do honour to their country, and real service to the Company."

After the appointment of the Secret Committee, the attendance of the members of the Select Committee began to relax. Some became tired of the business, and others stayed away, dis-

liking the personal and inquisitorial turn latterly given to their proceedings. Nearly a year, accordingly, intervenes between the dates of their second and third reports. It seems that Colonel Burgoyne, Governor Johnstone, Mr. Ongley, and Mr. Strachey, continued regular in their attendance; but it was with much difficulty, even during the sitting of Parliament, that seven members could be collected, without which the Committee could not sit. Still, however, the Chairman persevered; and various reports, several of them containing matter of great importance, were finally prepared.

The Secret Committee had been chiefly named by the Ministry. It had in its number several men of business, who, not being prompted by any personal resentments, and desirous of avoiding the reproaches thrown upon the first Committee, proceeded to scrutinise the actual state of the Company's concerns, so as to afford to the House data, so much required for coming to a conclusion regarding the real condition and solvency of the Company, and the general management of its affairs at home and abroad. The Minister was anxious, from the labours of the two, to be able to discover some principles for the guidance of the Company's affairs, and to enable the Government to satisfy the country. The questions had become very complicated,

and numerous individuals were implicated. The Attorney-General, Thurlow, undertook to peruse the papers during the Easter holidays, and to lay before the Minister the propositions that might result from them. A consultation, to which were called the chief ministerial members who had taken an active part in India affairs, was afterwards held at the Minister's house. The Solicitor-General, Wedderburn, who was known to be Lord Clive's personal friend, was not invited. The proposition made by the Attorney-General, after considering the papers, is said to have been, that Parliament should confiscate to the public all the sums acquired by English public servants in the East Indies, under the denomination of presents from the Indian Princes, as having been obtained by the military force of this country, and, therefore, belonging to the State. This sweeping proposition, which confounded different times and circumstances, startled the meeting. Some of them observed, that no distinction was made between presents received before and after they were prohibited; that some had been received as the reward of signal meritorious services, and enjoyed for a long series of years, without any claim having been made upon them either by the State or the Company; and that, even as to those for whom such favourable distinctions

could not be made, to deprive them, to their ruin, of property that had been long and quietly enjoyed, would be considered as harsh and revolting. The surly lawyer declared that, upon mature consideration, he had not been able to form any other proposition, and the consultation broke up.* It seems, however, to have been on this proposition, that Colonel Burgoyne grounded his subsequent motion.

It is obvious that committees constituted like the two in question, however industrious, and however impartial, must, from their composition, be liable to occasional errors; and before proceeding farther, it may be remarked that, in the course of their proceedings, several such did accordingly occur. The India House, from which their principal materials were to be derived, was under an influence most hostile to Lord Clive and his interests; and official men best know how easy it is to give a particular turn or colour even to official documents or accounts. Lord North, in his speech of March 23. 1773, remarked, that persons concerned in keeping the Company's accounts were such expert arithmeticians, that they were acquainted with the twofold manner of ciphering; in consequence of which it was apparent that there was such a thing as a two-

* Mr. Strachey's paper.

fold method of stating accounts. And Mr. Sullivan himself*, in the same debate, acknowledged that the statement made by the Secret and Select Committees, of the state of the Company's affairs, was in several respects erroneous. One of the most glaring errors of fact is to be found in the Third Report of the Select Committee, where Lord Clive is represented as having got his jaghire at the period of the revolution in favour of Meer Jaffier†, though in reality it was not granted for two years afterwards; a very important difference. Another instance may be given. The Secret Committee, in one of their Reports, stated that Lord Clive and his Council had paid away a large sum of money to individuals, under the head of Donation-money, in direct contradiction to an express order of the Court of Directors issued long before. On the publication of this statement, Lord Clive at once showed that it was erroneous; and that the order had been sent by the Falmouth, which was wrecked, and the packet lost; and that a duplicate did not reach Bengal till a considerable time after the payment had been made. These facts it accidentally happened that he was able to prove from the records

* Almon's Debates, 1773.

† Third Report of the Select Committee, p. 19.

of the India House. But assertions, even where unfounded, do not always admit of being disproved so satisfactorily, or even at all.

From this and some other articles misreported in a similar way, the partiality of the Secret Committee seemed liable to suspicion. From this imputation they were, however, exculpated by Mr. Jenkinson, afterwards Lord Liverpool, a member of the Committee, who informed the House, that, as the Committee had found it impossible themselves to search for facts among the vast mass of papers at the India House, they had been under the necessity of confiding in the diligence and accuracy of the clerks in the several departments; and that, for the matter then in debate, they had trusted to Mr. Samuel Wilks, the examiner of India correspondence, who appeared to them to be a man of extreme caution and industry.

The error in question was one that might have escaped Mr. Wilks quite unintentionally; but it is to be feared that all the errors or misrepresentations were not of the same description: and the circumstances to be stated, may prove what unseen yet formidable difficulties Lord Clive and all who were opposed to the Directors had to contend with, where the effect of a passing, incorrect assertion contained in a single line, was often not to be destroyed, if at all, by

long and painful representations of the real circumstances.

On the 3d of May, when Lord North moved for leave to bring in his Bill for the better management of the East India Company, Lord Clive solicited the indulgence of the House, while he explained a few facts which had been partially stated in the Reports of the Select Committee. While he defended his own character, he did not spare Lord North nor the Court of Directors. He complained in particular of the mean and dishonest artifices which had been resorted to by some of the Directors to blast his honest fame, and that through the agency of the Committee then sitting. That one gentleman, a member of that House, who had long been the principal manager of the affairs of the East India Company*, had on the seventh day of November last, in a private conversation with Mr. Hoole, the Auditor-General, told him that he wished for his assistance in a matter that would be particularly serviceable, and desired that he would draw up a complete state of the civil and military charges of Bengal, and likewise the revenues from the time of Lord Clive's arrival in Bengal in 1765; and directed him to refer to all the letters, plans, or regulations of Lord Clive, not-

* Mr. Sulivan.

ing how far the charges, revenues, &c. agreed with them; to trace out the causes of any increase or decrease; to draw up the whole historically and progressively, making all the accounts *his own;* and, as Mr. Sulivan expressed himself, *to mark the man;* concluding that he wished to show that all the distresses of the Company arose from *him.* Lord Clive reminded the House with what caution materials drawn up in such a spirit, and issuing from such a source, were to be received; and how easily, by the effect of so powerful an engine, any man's reputation could be destroyed.

Mr. Sulivan rose in his own vindication, and acknowledged the circumstance to be true; but said, that as Lord Clive had taken occasion in the House, last session, to impute the distresses of the Company to the Directors, he thought he, as a Director, was justified in endeavouring to turn the tables, and lay the blame upon his Lordship, which he had been in hopes of doing fairly, with the assistance of Mr. Hoole. He then expatiated upon the enmity which had long been maintained against him by Lord Clive; and to show that it had not been reciprocal, he would now, he said, divulge a circumstance highly injurious to the noble Lord's honour, and which he had industriously concealed from the Secret Committee: this was the suppression of sixteen

months' correspondence which had passed during his first government of Bengal, and which, though repeatedly called for by the Directors, had never been produced: that it was believed that the letters so suppressed might set the business of the jaghire in a different light from any in which it had yet appeared. Lord Clive, immediately rising, stated the facts. The correspondence with Indian Princes is always carried on by the Governor only; and translations are kept in books transmitted to the Directors from time to time. Some portion of it, written in the year 1759, by some accident had been neglected to be sent home. In 1763, when Lord Clive filed a bill against the Company for recovering his jaghire, the Directors (suspecting that the missing letters might contain something of importance, and had therefore been with withheld) called on him to produce them, as it was presumed that he had retained copies for himself of his correspondence. In answer, he acquainted the Court that he had delivered the sections in question to Mr. Campbell, a Scotch author, in the year 1760, in order to prepare a memorial concerning the Dutch affairs to be laid before Mr. Pitt, then Secretary of State: that since then he had not seen them, though he had in vain made every inquiry after them; but that, from his own knowledge, he could affirm they

did not contain any thing that could affect the matter in dispute between him and the Company.

To this statement Mr. Sulivan, of course, might give only such credit as he was disposed; but, as it happened, some account of the debate having appeared in the public newspapers, Dr. Campbell wrote to inform Lord Clive that he had found the sections mentioned by Mr. Sulivan, and was ready to deliver them to his Lordship's order. They were accordingly recovered next day, and immediately sent to the Court of Directors, and were found not to have the smallest reference to the jaghire.

But though Lord Clive had it in his power to meet and answer thus speedily these reflections upon his character, it is very evident that this good fortune was partly owing to accident; and that, in many similar instances, the most honourable and the most cautious of men might have found it altogether impossible to explain, at the moment, or at all, charges thus brought against them, at the distance of many years, when the minute circumstances had dropped from their memory, when documents had been mislaid or lost, or witnesses had fallen under the stroke of death. Several persons, whose acts were alluded to in the various reports, complained bitterly of this, as well as that the injury was not known till

it had become in some measure irreparable by publication.

At length the storm which had so long been gathering against Lord Clive in the Select Committee, burst upon his head. The Committee had taken a historical view of the whole incidents, military and political, that had occurred in Bengal for seventeen years before; and Lord Clive and most of the chief agents who had been engaged in them had been repeatedly examined. Colonel Burgoyne, who, on the 8th and 21st of April, had brought up the Third and Fourth Reports of the Committee, called the attention of the House to them on the 10th of May*, and, after alluding

* A gentleman who was present, on the 3d of May, at the debate already mentioned, in writing to a friend, observes: "Lord Clive's speech was certainly a very able one, but it was not calculated to conciliate matters. He laid about him on all sides: he reprehended the Court of Directors, past and present: the Court of Proprietors, the citizens of London, the country gentlemen of England, the servants of the Company abroad, the Secret and Select Committees, the Opposition, the Minister and Ministry. He paid a compliment to the King. He declared he would support Government, where he could do it honourably. He offended the Opposition, without gaining the Minister. I suspected so then,—I am now convinced of it." Of the debate of the 10th he says, "I was in the House all this day, and had the mortification to hear the transactions in India, for these last sixteen years, treated, without distinction, as a disgrace to this nation; but without the smallest idea of restoring to the injured natives of India the territories and revenues said to have been so unjustly acquired."

to the disagreeable situation in which he was placed, declared that the Reports contained an account of crimes shocking to human nature; that all the disasters that had befallen the Company and their affairs in the East could be traced back to the dethronement of Suraj-u-Dowlah, and the establishment of Meer Jaffier; a revolution, he said, effected by the blackest perfidy. He dwelt upon the circumstances of that event, in which Lord Clive took the leading part; the fictitious treaty by which Omichund was induced to desert his master; the forging, as he alleged, of Admiral Watson's name to that treaty, when the Admiral himself refused to subscribe it; the subsequent agreement with Meer Jaffier, and the immense sums received by the Select Committee of Calcutta, and others of the principal agents, under the name of presents or donations, but which, being, as he asserted, extorted by the influence of military force, did, like all acquisitions by treaty with foreign powers, of right belong to the State. He also attacked the proceedings of General Caillaud and others; and after expatiating on the enormities which the Reports had brought to light, he concluded by moving the following resolutions: — 1. That all acquisitions made under the influence of a military force, or by treaty with foreign Princes, do of right belong to the State. 2. That to

appropriate acquisitions so made to the private emolument of persons entrusted with any civil or military power of the State, is illegal. 3. That very great sums of money and other valuable property have been acquired in Bengal, from Princes and others of that country, by persons entrusted with the military and civil powers of the State, by means of such powers, which sums of money and valuable property have been appropriated to the private use of such persons."

Colonel Burgoyne intimated to the House that, if these resolutions met with their approbation, he would not stop there, but would follow them up with vigour; and that his object was to compel such as had acquired sums of money in the way alluded to, to make full and complete restitution to the public.

The motion was seconded by Sir William Meredith; who said that there were only two possible ways to bring about a reformation in the East Indies,—the one by law, the other by example. That as to law, he could not comprehend how it was practicable to enforce laws made at such a distance: that the constitution of the present government of Bengal was defined to be a union of the sovereign and merchant; and that Mr. Vansittart explained what was the law by which these merchant-sovereigns exercised their supreme power: their rule of selling was

to take as much as they pleased, while the rule by which they bought was to pay as little as they pleased. That the evils complained of were to be corrected not by law only, but by example; and deplored the stain brought upon the British name by the transactions which the Reports before the House disclosed.

Mr. Wedderburn answered, at considerable length, the principal assertions of the speakers that preceded him; and showed the incompetency of the evidence on which some of the facts rested, and the erroneous and unjust conclusions that had been drawn from others, so far as concerned Lord Clive. As to the forgery of Admiral Watson's name to the treaty with Omichund (he continued), it would be needless to analyse it, because the noble Lord has declared that, had it been necessary, he himself readily would have done it, and certainly done right in politics, to take that or any other means to destroy in an enemy so great a tyrant. He concluded by saying, that the resolutions before the House were founded in envy and illiberal principles; they were narrow, pointed at individuals, and neglecting future reformation, which ought to be the grand object of the inquiry; and above all, that there was in the Reports an indecision and defect of evidence that must render every thing done on their authority arbitrary and ille-

gal. Mr. Attorney-General Thurlow defended the resolutions, and answered Mr. Wedderburn's speech.

In the course of the debate Lord Clive rose, and defended himself with great dignity and force. He pointed out the mistakes in matters of fact in the Reports, and in the speeches founded on them. He took a review of his own public life and services, and especially of that part of them that had been brought into question. He claimed the rewards and the honours bestowed on him as justly his due; lamented the abuse that had been made of the public press, and the mode resorted to of slandering the character of all orders of men without distinction: that for his part, he had been called villain, scoundrel, thief, murderer, assassin, &c.; but that he need not complain, as even Majesty itself had not escaped this implacable fury. What he regretted was the cause of virtue and public spirit, which must inevitably suffer, if this abuse was permitted to go unpunished; since the greatest inducement to men of superior talent to stand forth and distinguish themselves in their country's cause, was the hope of fair fame and just applause. Having explained the circumstances of the revolution, so far as he was concerned, and defended the legality of all the presents he had received, both in point of law

and of justice, and alluded to the honours he had received for the very acts now questioned, he concluded by saying, "If the record of my services at the India House, if the defence I have twice made in this House, and if the approbation I have already met with, is not an answer to the attack that has been made upon me, I certainly can make none."

The two first resolutions passed without a division; and the third was also carried, though after some opposition.

Encouraged by this success, Colonel Burgoyne, on the 17th of May, prepared to bring home these general propositions to the individuals concerned; and, in the first place, pointed his charges against Lord Clive. He began by making some remarks on the invidious situation in which he was placed by the conscientious discharge of his duty. "The task of a public accuser was never a pleasing, but was sometimes a necessary one. Envy and malignity were the vices of little minds, and he disclaimed them. The House, in its movements, had only followed the cry of the public. Instances of rapacity and injustice had occurred in our Eastern possessions, that were known to all the world; an inordinate desire of wealth had had full play, and had led to transactions which had stigmatised those immediately concerned in them, and

affected even the British name. That it was the duty of the House, as guardians of the nation's honour, to apply a remedy; and as the vice had been general, so must the punishment. It was a case in which no partial or limited censure would suffice to remove the evil, or to wipe off the stain from the country. The whole system on which the agents in the various revolutions had been remunerated, or rather had remunerated themselves, was most exceptionable and illegal. The first principle that he would lay down was, that it was impossible that any civil or military servant, in treating with a foreign Prince or State, could lawfully bargain for, or acquire, property for himself. This principle had uniformly been departed from in all the transactions which had been laid before the House. It would be necessary to point out who the persons were who had so acquired property, and the particular circumstances under which it had been acquired. Death had removed some of these persons, and their case would therefore be a matter of future consideration. That it was proper to consider the state of India at the time when the money was received. A mighty change had just taken place in that country, and in the Company's affairs. In the year 1757, when the English ascendancy was established, the Company was raised, as by the power of

magic, from the situation of merchants to that of sovereign Princes, and, in their delirium, they at once forgot their charters; while their servants, become ministers, and rulers of the Governors of provinces and Princes, looked with contempt on the slow returns of trade and merchandise, since they saw before them a shorter and surer way to opulence. What was the consequence? The power thus placed in their hands was not tenderly employed. Revolution followed revolution; and, at each successive change, the treasures of the Prince were lavished to glut the rapacity of the agents by whom it was effected. At last, when the whole treasures of the Princes were exhausted, they did not stop short, but took possession of the country itself, at the same time that they retained the name of the puppet whom they set up, only to confound all ideas of right and justice. In the revolution of 1757, effected by Lord Clive, great stress had been laid on its necessity; but every succeeding revolution had been sustained on the same ground,—a ground that never would be wanting. It appeared that, by the treaty with Sujah-u-Dowlah, the Company were confirmed in all the privileges they had formerly enjoyed; the Company had their factories restored; and to individuals who had suffered, a compensation was made. Surely, in such cir-

cumstances, the Nabob had a right to expect to be able to preserve a state of neutrality among the different nations who had factories in his dominions; yet, on the breaking out of the war with France, it was thought proper to violate the treaty just concluded, by attacking Chandernagore. The Select Committee were not unanimous on this point. Becher was for neutrality, Drake had no opinion at all. The violent counsels of Clive prevailed. It was argued, that having gone so far we must go farther; that having established ourselves by force, we had made the Nabob our enemy, and that in consequence he must always be ready to join our enemies; and some circumstances of his conduct, said to indicate a hostile feeling, were pointed out. But, in fact, when we broke with him, and hurled him from his high eminence, Suraj-u-Dowlah had been guilty of no overt act of hostility; all that was alleged, were various suspicions that he *meant* to break the treaty." He detailed the circumstances attending the deposition of Meer Jaffier; the various sums received by Lord Clive, amounting to 2,080,000 rupees, or 234,000*l.* sterling; and contended that they were received contrary to justice and right.

He acknowledged that, in the Dutch affair, Lord Clive had shown perfect magnanimity and disinterestedness.

"Soon after this first revolution was effected, the fortunes of those concerned in it being made, we had an importation of Nabobs, — a circumstance which only whetted the rapacity of those who were still on the scene of action. There were now new men, a new Council to be satisfied, and the principles of the revolution of 1757 were not forgotten. It was discovered that there was a necessity for another revolution; and accordingly, in 1760, Meer Cossim was placed in the seat of Meer Jaffier. But Cossim was an able tyrant, who was soon found to be too intelligent to serve the purpose of a mere tool, and it became necessary to restore Jaffier. With Cossim, indeed, there was no stipulation for rewards. Mr. Vansittart was then Governor. Twenty lacs of rupees were offered to the Council for their favour and countenance. But no; the Company's servants put by them the proffered treasure, as Cæsar put by the crown. The Nabob was, however, given to understand, that after their masters the Company were satisfied, the servants would have no objection to receive what was offered. It was difficult to treat seriously this mighty difference between taking money before and after a treaty. The consequences are but too obvious, and amount to the same thing.

"In the case of the Nabob Najm-Dowlah which

followed, the succession was a regular one, and the deputation which was sent on the occasion, headed by Mr. John Johnstone, acted with fidelity in establishing the proper heir; but they improved a regular accession to the purpose of a revolution, and enriched themselves and the other Members of the Council by presents and donations received in the course of this common discharge of an ordinary duty. "I won't," said he, "colour and conceal the conduct of the Council. They are unjustifiable. They knew of the existence of the covenants prohibiting them from receiving presents, at the very time when they bargained for and received them. I have no acquaintance with any of them. I owe them neither partiality nor grudge. I am, indeed, happy and proud to be esteemed the friend of Governor Johnstone, the relative of one whose name has been mixed in these transactions; but that has no influence on my judgment. At the same time it is not possible to overlook the mode in which evidence was procured in India, on this last subject, under the influence of Lord Clive, by persecution not to be equalled in Portugal. The witnesses were brought up under military guard: little pains were taken to contradict facts, when they were known to be false. The result of these inquiries is embodied

in the infamous letter of September, 1765*, a composition which disgraces the ablest pen by the direction in which it was employed.

"Into the question relating to the money received from the Begum† I shall not enter, as the Report is not yet on the table. But from the documents before the House, it will appear that the total amount of the presents and donations received by Lord Clive was 2,000,000 of rupees, exclusive of the jaghire. My object is, that restitution of this sum should be made to the Company and the sufferers. If any man can say that these sums were received according to the correct definition of presents, I shall be exceedingly surprized. Such is not the light in which I hold them.

"Let it be remembered, that the revolution of 1757 was the foundation and the model of all the subsequent revolutions. Our vindictive justice must go back to the origin of the evil. It is in many mouths, the hardship of taking up a subject after such a time, and of wresting from a man a fortune valiantly obtained and generously

* The letter of 30th of September, 1765, from the Select Committee to the Court of Directors, in which par. 5–13. contain the details of the delinquency of Mr. Johnstone, the Governor, and Council.

† The question relating to Meer Jaffier's legacy, the subject of the Fifth Report of the Select Committee.

dispensed. If time is to sanctify such offences, we should bring in a statute of limitation of robbery. Let it not be said, that the magnitude of the offence, and the wealth and dignity of the offender, are to be deemed a sufficient justification.

"No public notice was given to the Company of the receipt of these sums. But it is said that there is no instance of reporting to the Company private donations, though they were always understood to be received; and it is said that Lord Clive's were known to the Court. If so, I shall be glad to hear only a letter saying so.—But they acquiesced when they were known. That I deny. A Court of Proprietors passed, in 1760, a positive order to institute a minute inquiry about these presents. It is said that he had rendered great and important services to the Company and his country. No doubt, services should be duly weighed, and national rewards bestowed on national services, and that amply. I wish to see the names of Lawrence, Draper, Monson, and of many other eminent men, who have rescued us from more than *Indian* armies, honoured with due estimation; and far be it from me to deny to Lord Clive the meed of praise that is due to him. But in coming to a judgment on the grave and serious charges now before the House, all partiality and all prejudice

in a man's favour should be laid aside: an act of national justice is called for; it is not to be influenced by wealth or connections, and will be given if a particle of that vital fire that first invigorated this constitution still remains. Imitate the first example of antiquity, and strike, like Manlius, when the justice of the State requires it.

"I wish not to plunder or impoverish Lord Clive, or the subjects of this motion. I am willing they should remain in possession of such rewards as a generous State would give. What I ask is, a Bill for the satisfaction of sufferers out of the private estates of persons who received sums of money unwarrantably. Such satisfaction ought to be made to the Company, and applied to the discharge of their debts. Leave something to them of their overgrown fortunes, but let it be upon European principles; let it be arranged on the principles of the better times of our history. Where were jaghires and private donations in the time of King William, to whom our liberties owe so much? In the Act to be passed, let the monies go, as they should originally have done, to the State. I have no desire, no wish, that after satisfaction has been made, any odium should remain against the accused. I have offered them an opportunity of bringing their characters from under the cloud which has surrounded them, and of justifying themselves

to the world." He concludedby moving, "That it appears to this House, that the Right Hon. Robert Lord Clive, Baron of Plassey in the kingdom of Ireland, about the time of the deposition of Suraj-û-Dowlah, and the establishment of Meer Jaffier on the musmud, through the influence of the powers with which he was entrusted as a member of the Select Committee and Commander-in-chief of the British forces, did obtain and possess himself of 2 lacs of rupees as Commander-in-chief, a farther sum of 2 lacs and 80,000 rupees as member of the Select Committee, and a farther sum of 16 lacs or more under the denomination of a private donation; which sums, amounting together to 20 lacs and 80,000 rupees, were of the value, in English money, of 234,000*l.*; and that, in so doing, the said Robert Lord Clive abused the power with which he was entrusted, to the evil example of the servants of the public, and to the dishonour and detriment of the State.' *

These resolutions were seconded by Sir Wm. Meredith, who combated the notion of the supposed hardship of bringing up such charges, after a period of sixteen years, and contended that length of time could not improve the title to wealth so ac-

* This report of Colonel Burgoyne's speech is from the notes in pencil of a member who was present.

quired. As to presents, he denied that covenants alone made the receiving of them a crime, or that where there were no covenants they were legal: that it had been found,indeed, that presents had been taken, after the receipt of the covenants, by Mr. Johnstone and others, in circumstances which had been investigated and published by Lord Clive; but that it did not appear that the ill-blood excited by such disclosure had had the slightest influence on the conduct of his brother, the Governor, who had carried on the investigation before the Committee with perfect exactness: that it could not be overlooked, that the evidence against that gentleman had been taken in a most illegal manner, the witnesses being under restraint: that Lord Clive's supposed generosity in not plundering Moorshedabad was nugatory; that he entered it not as a conqueror, but as an ally: nor would the assertion, that there was no criminal intention in receiving the presents, acquit him; that would only affect the *extent* of the consequences. Colonel Burgoyne's original motion was to be kept in mind, and that he was content to leave him all that his merit deserved. Others had fought against European enemies, he against wretched Indians,—a circumstance not to be forgotten in estimating the comparative merit of officers.

Mr. Wedderburn (then Solicitor-General) stre-

nuously opposed the motion. He said that the House was in danger of being led blindly and inconsiderately, from misdirected feelings, to commit a grand injustice towards one of the most illustrious men of his country. With respect to presents, on which the burthen of the accusation lay, he argued, that there were some, indeed many, situations, wherein the receipt of presents was justifiable upon every principle of disinterested integrity: and such, he contended, they were in the present instance, where a great capital had been saved from the horrors of pillage, or military contribution; and where signal services had been rendered to a sovereign Prince, who had adopted only the ordinary means of showing his gratitude: they were justifiable both from the extraordinary circumstances of the case, and from the known customs and usages of the country. He largely expatiated on the deep obligations under which the nation lay to Lord Clive; and affirmed, that for the Parliament to accuse a man of delinquency, upon the necessarily partial report of a Select Committee, would be to accuse him without competent evidence, and to be guilty of an act of flagrant injustice.

Mr. Richard Fuller, one of the Committee, took a similar view of the case; and while he doubted the competency of the kind of evidence,

declared that the latter part of the Committee's report was undoubtedly not true.

Lord North said that he was determined to attend to every part of the evidence, and to judge of its effect; that any abuse of public authority was of pernicious example; and that the glory which surrounded such presents, did not, if they were illegal, render them less culpable. The high example would in its effects be only the more pernicious; — "Jupiter hoc faxit; ego homuncio non faciam."

Lord Clive, in the course of the debate, made a long defence of his conduct*: "Sir, after rendering my country the service which I think I may, without any degree of vanity, claim the merit of; and after having nearly exhausted a life full of employment, for the public welfare and the particular benefit of the East India Company, I little thought that such transactions would have agitated the minds of my countrymen in proceedings like the present, tending to deprive me not only of my property and the for-

* It is to be regretted that no correct report of Lord Clive's speech has been preserved. The notes now given, chiefly from Almon's Debates, have the air of being made up of fragments of speeches delivered at different times at this crisis. Some assistance has been derived from a letter of Archibald Sarton, Esq., who was present.

tune which I have fairly acquired, but of that which I hold more dear to me—my honour and reputation." He in the first place solicited the patient indulgence of the House, while he corrected some facts which had been erroneously stated. He then went through the reports of the Committees, on which the charges were founded, and examined the different passages that concerned him. He justified himself in regard to all his acts, civil and political; and maintained that his whole conduct had been not only open and undisguised, but perfectly legal, and above all blame. On the principal charges, he read extracts of the Nabob's letter to him as President of the Select Committee, of the Committee's letter to the Directors, and finally of the Directors' letter containing their full approbation of his proceedings. He entered minutely into the circumstances of each charge, and observed that, trained in the school of war and politics as he had been for twenty years, he was now improving in the school of philosophy, and, if patience was a virtue, he had no doubt of soon being very virtuous indeed. He said that the present charges arose out of the wretched state of the Company's affairs; the Directors and Government would willingly shift the blame from themselves. He enlarged on the misconduct of the Directors; and arraigned the un-

pardonable remissness of former administrations, in neglecting the affairs of India; that mismanagement abroad was founded on mismanagement at home. He pointed out the malevolence and artifice of his enemies, and the low and insidious means by which he had been assailed; that when he went out to India the last time, he had promised not to add a shilling to his fortune, directly or indirectly, and this engagement, he declared to God, he had religiously observed.

He complimented Lord North ironically on his vast abilities displayed in the bargain which he had driven with the Company: that he was the lion, the Company the jackal, or lion's provider: that he had already seized on three quarters of its prey; and no doubt the lion, next time that it returned hungry to its den, would seize the remaining quarter also. That he stood there an independent man, and would give Government every honourable assistance, where he thought them right; but further he would not go: that as to the Company, he lamented their situation: they had been long tampered with by quacks till, reduced to an absolute consumption, they had thrown themselves on Parliament, the only physician who could effect a cure. He said, that for two years past the Directors had kept the affairs of the Company a secret, while they feasted at taverns, and

employed a man*, whom they allowed 400*l.* a year, to think for them: that meanwhile their expenses in India were increasing extravagantly beyond what they were when he left it. He complained that the malevolence employed against him, reduced him to the necessity of being the herald of his own fame. "I have served my country and the Company faithfully; and had it been my fortune to be employed by the Crown, I should not have been in the situation I am in at present; I should have been differently rewarded: no retrospect would have been had to sixteen years past, and I should not have been forced to plead for what is dearer than life — my reputation. My situation, Sir, has not been an easy one for these twelve months past; and though my conscience never could accuse me, yet I felt for my friends, who were involved in the same censure as myself. Sir, not a stone has been left unturned, where the least probability could arise of discovering something of a criminal nature against me. The two Committees, Sir, seem to have bent the whole of their inquiries to the conduct of their humble servant, the Baron of Plassey, and I have been examined by the Select Committee more like a sheep-stealer than a member of this House. I

* Mr. Samuel Wilks.

am sure, Sir, if I had any sore places about me, they would have been found; they have probed to the bottom: no lenient plasters have been applied to heal: no, Sir, they were all of the blister kind, prepared with Spanish flies and other provocatives. The public records have been ransacked for proofs against me; and the late Deputy Chairman of the India Company, a worthy member of this House, has been very assiduous, indeed so assiduous in my affairs, that really, Sir, it appears that he has entirely neglected his own. As for punishments, which have been spoken of as necessary, I have a plan to propose which I think may be of great use. The three Jacobite heads which were lately upon Temple Bar have tumbled down, but the poles remain; and as there is no probability of the heads being replaced, for Jacobitism seems at an end, (at least some people have strangely altered their opinions of late years,) there can be no farther occasion for them on that score: now, I would propose that the heads of three East Indians be stuck up in their stead, *in terrorem*, and that my head, by way of pre-eminence, be put in the middle; and as his Majesty has given me a title to supporters, I cannot pitch upon more proper ones than the heads of the late Chairman and Deputy to be placed one on each side, on the other two poles."

He next examined the regulations proposed by Ministers for India, and the measures of the Directors; and asserted that they had improvidently, in a country peculiarly liable to temptation, abolished all the lawful rewards of the service, and left the country at the mercy of a handful of boys. He proceeded to examine the question of presents. He had always recommended, approved of, and enforced the covenants against them. He considered these covenants as indispensable in the present state of the country, when we were its rulers; but even then, to render them efficient, the public servants must have within their view the prospect of an honourable and attainable independence. Wealth and weakness can never safely be placed beside poverty and power. As for presents in themselves, he was firmly of opinion that, in honourable cases, it was not improper to receive them: that they were only improper in dishonourable cases: that presents had been allowed to be received from the earliest days of the Company; they had been received uninterruptedly for the space of a hundred and fifty years, and by men who sat in the Direction; they were a lawful part of the social system of the East. "In the early part of my life," he continued, "my labours were without emolument or laurels; and I hope the House cannot

think that I ought not to be rewarded for my services to my country in the latter part of it. When I was first employed by the Company, their affairs abroad were in a condition much to be lamented. Misfortunes attended them in every part of their settlements, and the Nabobs looked with a jealous eye upon the small privileges and possessions they then enjoyed; though small, in danger every day of being wrested from them. Their fears and weakness were surrounded by dangers on every side. In this critical situation it pleased God to make me the instrument of their deliverance." He drew a rapid and bold sketch of his transactions in India, in particular of his proceedings in regard to Suraj-u-Dowlah and Omichund: he asserted that the former was dethroned for his breach of faith, and as a necessary and lawful measure of self defence; that the latter was only entangled in the toils of intrigue and treachery woven by himself: that Admiral Watson expressed his thorough approbation of the proceedings in the revolution, and the means by which it was obtained; and he read the letter signed by him in conjunction with the Committee to that effect: that, great as his fortune was, it bore no proportion to what he might have made it: that not a sixpence was received from the inhabitants of Moorshedabad, who came to offer contributions to deliver them from being

plundered by a victorious army: that his jaghire was not received in 1757, at the time of the revolution, as had been erroneously represented; it was not received till 1759, two years after. He described his attack on the Dutch armament, which he destroyed, as well as their army, and that at a time when most of his property was in the hands of the Dutch Company; a fact that showed no want of zeal for the honour and interest of the service, even at the imminent risk of ruin to his own fortune. He enumerated the marks of honour which he had received: he read the letters of the Court of Directors in approbation of the revolution, and of his conduct in it. "These, Sir," he exclaimed, "are surely sufficient certificates of my behaviour, and of the proceedings of that revolution; and, whatever the House may think of them, will remain an everlasting approbation of my conduct from those persons who alone employed me, and whose servant I was. A late Minister (Lord Chatham), whose abilities have been an honour to his country, and whom this House will ever revere, will, I am sure, come to your bar, and not only tell you how highly he thought of my services at the time, but also what his opinion is now."

He adverted to his second government, undertaken at the express desire of the Company; the toils and difficulties he had to encounter, and

which he overcame; and the thanks and congratulations solemnly lavished upon him, in a special audience appointed for the express purpose, at Leadenhall Street, on his return. "These, Sir," said he, "were circumstances, certainly, that gave me a full satisfaction, and a ground to think that my conduct in every instance was approved of. After such certificates as these, Sir, am I to be brought here like a criminal, and the very best parts of my conduct construed into crimes against the state? Is this the reward that is now held out to persons who have performed such important services to their country? If it is, Sir, the future consequences that will attend the execution of any important trust committed to the persons who have the care of it, will be fatal indeed; and I am sure the Noble Lord upon the Treasury Bench, whose great humanity I revere, would never have consented to the resolution that passed the other night, if he had thought on the dreadful consequences that would attend them. Sir, I cannot say that I either sit or rest easy when I find, by that extensive resolution, that all I have in the world is confiscated, and that no one will take my security for a shilling. These, Sir, are dreadful apprehensions to remain under; and I cannot look upon myself but as a bankrupt. I have not any thing left that I can call my own, except

my paternal fortune of 500*l.* per annum, and which has been in the family for ages past. But upon this I am content to live; and perhaps I shall find more real content of mind and happiness than in the trembling affluence of an unsettled fortune. But, Sir, I must make one more observation, — that if the definition of the honourable gentleman (Colonel Burgoyne) and of this House, that the state, as expressed in these resolutions, is, *quoad hoc*, the Company, then, Sir, every farthing I enjoy is granted to me. But to be called upon, after sixteen years have elapsed, to account for my conduct in this manner, and, after an uninterrupted enjoyment of my property, to be questioned, and considered as obtaining it unwarrantably, is hard indeed! and a treatment I should not think the British Senate capable of. But, if such should be the case, I have a conscious innocence within me that tells me my conduct is irreproachable. *Frangas, non flectes.* My enemies may take from me what I have; they may, as they think, make me poor, but I will be happy! I mean not this as my defence, though I have done for the present. My defence will be heard at that bar; but, before I sit down, I have one request to make to the House, — that, when they come to decide upon my honour, they will not forget their own."

After some debate, the farther consideration

of the motion was deferred, and it was ordered that evidence should be heard at the bar.

On the 21st of May, on the motion of Colonel Burgoyne, certain witnesses were examined. Lord Clive's evidence before the Committee was read; on which his Lordship made a short speech, concluding with the words, "Take my fortune, but save my honour," and immediately retired from the House.

The three propositions which had been carried by Colonel Burgoyne, on the 10th of May, though plainly, and by direct inference, affecting, and even aimed at, Lord Clive, had, however, been couched in loose general terms. Certain principles being given, and the existence of some abuses not disputed, certain consequences inevitably followed. The House was sensible, from the Reports, and from other sources, that great enormities had been committed in India; and, desirous to show its disapprobation and censure, willingly suffered itself to be led to acquiesce in these resolutions. But when, leaving generalities, Colonel Burgoyne called upon them to mark an individual as being concerned in, and indeed as the guilty leader in these offences, the ground was changed. They were brought back from generalities to special facts and to individuals, and found the necessity of proceeding cautiously in their conclusions.

The generous feelings which in the one case had combated in favour of the motions, were now silent, or even enlisted on the side of the accused. A careful and cautious examination of facts and of character was necessary; and inquiry showed that the evidence was loose and defective, for the most part *exparte*, and often depending on circumstances of time, country, or situation that changed its nature. The man attacked was one of the most illustrious of his age, who by his exalted talents had raised himself, early in life, to the highest rank in his nation; whose gallant deeds in the field of battle every Englishman had admired and gloried in; who had retrieved the falling fortunes of his country, and, by his military achievements and his political talents, had added to its dominion a large empire, one of the richest in the world, which that country had not thrown from her with disdain, as gained by illegal or unjustifiable means, but cherished as one of her noblest possessions, the richest jewel in the British crown; that wealth which he had gained, he had enjoyed with honour and dignity, unchallenged for sixteen years, though now it was to be wrenched from him by the application of rules which had no existence in the country in which it was acquired. Doubts began to arise, whether a grand injustice was not about to be inflicted by England on one of the greatest

and noblest of her sons: the circumstances of personal excitement under which the evidence had been collected could not be overlooked; and the more carefully the application of that evidence was made to the case, on the principles of general justice and universal policy, the more did it appear that there was a danger of making the British Parliament the instrument of flagrant injustice and ingratitude.

When the question itself came on, and the direct charges brought against Lord Clive were before the House, Mr. Stanley moved that the words, "And in so doing, the said Robert Lord Clive abused the powers with which he was intrusted, to the evil example of the servants of the public, and to the dishonour and detriment of the State," should be omitted; and was seconded by Mr. Richard Fuller, who carried his amendment farther back into the body of the motion, and proposed that the words, "through the influence of the powers with which he was intrusted, as a Member of the Select Committee, and Commander-in-chief of the British forces," should also be omitted. A very warm and long debate ensued between those who supported the original motion, and those who were in favour of the amendment, expressive of mere undisputed facts, which left the motion in this form: "That it appears to this

House, that the Right Honourable Robert Lord Clive, Baron of Plassey in the kingdom of Ireland, about the time of the deposition of Suraj-u-Dowlah, and the establishment of Meer Jaffier on the musnud, did obtain and possess himself of 2 lacs of rupees as Commander-in-chief, a further sum of 2 lacs and 80,000 rupees as Member of the Select Committee, and a further sum of 16 lacs or more under the denomination of a private donation; which sums, amounting together to 20 lacs and 80,000 rupees, were of the value, in English money, of 234,000*l.*" And the motion, in this form, was finally carried, on a division of 155 to 95.*

It was then moved, "That Lord Clive did, in so doing, abuse the powers with which he was intrusted, to the evil example of the servants of the public;" but the motion was rejected without a division.

* "On this point," says a well-informed writer in the Annual Register (1773, p. 107.), "the grand struggle was made. Those who speculate, observed an extraordinary division of those who, on all other occasions, acted together. The Minister declared in favour of the words of censure on Lord Clive, and divided in the minority. The Attorney-General was a principal in the attack; the Solicitor-General managed the defence. The courtiers went different ways. The most considerable part of the opposition supported Lord Clive, though he had joined administration and supported them in their proceedings against the Company."

A motion was finally made, about five in the morning, "That Robert Lord Clive did, at the same time, render great and meritorious services to his country;" which passed unanimously.*

Such was the termination of these Parliamentary proceedings, so far as regarded Lord Clive. It may be proper to remark, that in the meanwhile various bills regarding India affairs were pushed forward. The plan proposed and carried through by the Government, at that important crisis, though it was intended to be a final settlement of the constitution of the Company's government, and though it contained many changes, and some very beneficial regulations, was still only a palliative. A loan of 1,400,000*l.* was granted to relieve the Company from their immediate difficulties; the Company's dividend being restrained to 6 per cent. until it was repaid, and to 7 per cent. until their bond debt was reduced to 1,500,000*l.* The

* There is a very great confusion in the Parliamentary Reports regarding the proceedings connected with the attack on Lord Clive. Reports were then published only surreptitiously, and were often incorrect. The dates of the different debates are given differently in different publications; and speeches are referred to wrong occasions, or several mixed up together. This is the case even with Almon's Debates, in which what is given as Lord Clive's speech of 3d May, 1773, contains portions, evidently inaccurate, of his speeches on that and future days.

public was not to participate in the profits of the Company till this latter event, when three fourths of the net surplus profits of the Company at home, above the sum of 8 per cent. on their capital stock, was to be paid into the Exchequer for the use of the public, the remaining fourth to be set aside for reducing the Company's debt, and other purposes specified: the territorial acquisitions to remain with the Company for six years more: the Court of Directors were in future to be elected for four years, six members going out annually: no Proprietor was to vote at the election who had not possessed his stock for twelve months, and the qualification was to be 1000*l.* instead of 500*l.*: a new Court of Justice was established at Calcutta, consisting of a Chief Justice and three Puisne Judges; and a superiority given to the Presidency of Bengal over the others. The Council was to consist of a Governor-General and four Members, to be named in the first instance by Parliament; and, in pursuance of the act, Mr. Hastings was appointed Governor-General, with General Clavering, Colonel Monson, Mr. Barwell, and Mr. Francis in Council.

It is clear that these enactments were quite insufficient to remedy the evils complained of; and India was accordingly doomed for several years more to pay the penalty of this timid and

inefficient legislation. The truth is, that the Ministry were conscious that their knowledge of Indian affairs was extremely imperfect; and that the task of legislation for a distant empire, if not beyond their powers, at least required more leisure than they were able or disposed to pay to it. The spirit of the times, too, was adverse to bold or extensive legislation, and delighted more in temporary expedients and palliatives. America could hardly have remained much longer united to Britain; but this temper, common to many successive administrations, had much influence on the time and manner of the separation.

The complimentary resolution, passed unanimously by the House, closed the Parliamentary proceedings in which Lord Clive was personally concerned. In a letter to Mr. Hastings, the new Governor-General, written some months afterwards, he alludes to them. "All the Reports of the Committees are published," says he*, "and will of course be transmitted to you. A few envious and resentful individuals turned the whole attack upon me, and aimed at the ruin of my fortune and reputation. But the justice of the House of Commons defeated their intentions, and, by a great majority, passed a vote that I had rendered great and essential services to

* 14th October, 1773.

this country. The next session will show whether any other individuals are to be attacked; but I am of opinion the Parliament will rest satisfied with the late act, and leave the rest to the Governor and Council. I congratulate you on the distinction you are honoured with, in being the first Governor-General; and hope your colleagues will be unanimous in acting for the public good." But it is not surprising that the harassing persecution which he had sustained, and the ignoble charges brought and insinuated against him, should have made a deep and gloomy impression on his lofty mind. It has been remarked that, "Although, throughout this inquiry, Lord Clive displayed the greatest firmness and magnanimity, his mind never recovered its proper equilibrium. Wedded to glory, and pluming himself upon those actions which had elevated him to an unparalleled degree of fame, and unexampled grandeur of fortune, he could ill brook the necessity of defence, and felt as an ignominy the task of pleading for his character and property. He, upon whose pleasure had so often depended the fate of sovereigns and of states, who might with truth be styled 'the setter up and puller down of kings,' sickened at the recollection of that ingratitude which degraded him to the position of a culprit." *

* Adolphus's History of England, vol. ii. p. 25. *note.*

Few men have ever endured so severe and piercing a scrutiny into all their words and actions; and his situation has, in one respect, been different from that of most other great men, who were only subjects. He had been in some measure placed in the situation of an absolute sovereign. He not only held the military command, but directed, with more power than is enjoyed by most sovereign princes, the civil, financial, and political measures that emanate from supreme authority. He not only executed, but planned, and was the source as well as the instrument of action. He had to answer for wars undertaken, treaties made and broken, and severities exercised. He was not so much in the situation of a Marlborough or a Wellington, receiving certain orders, and following his judgment in executing them, as of a sovereign prince — a Frederic, a Bonaparte, an Alexander, who could act with nearly despotic authority in the execution of their designs. They, privileged by their rank, could only be called upon to answer at the tribunal of posterity. But, from his situation, a private man, a subject, and the servant of a trading company, his accusers blended together his different characters. There is always something, in the slightest accusation of delinquency in pecuniary matters, which is revolting to a generous mind. This his enemies

saw, and attempted to fix on the most liberal of men; trusting that, however complete the justification, some taint of the accusation would remain. It was not enough to him that he had been acquitted and applauded; he brooded over the indignity of having been accused. Nor was the public ingratitude, from which he suffered, the less grievous, that it was common to him with the great men of every age; although proudly conscious of his own integrity, and of the solid glory of his achievements and labours, he felt that he could trust his fame to distant countries and future times.

And distant countries had already begun to do justice to his great actions. A few days after the rising of Parliament, he received the following letter from Mr. Wedderburn, which the reader will not be displeased to see entire:—

"My dear Lord,

"Mr. Stuart informs me, that he has sent your Lordship a letter he received from the gentleman* who has the care of the Duke of Hamilton at Geneva, expressing the desire that Voltaire has to be informed of the affairs of the East Indies, and to celebrate the great actions that have been done there.

"I took the precaution of desiring Mr. Clive

* Dr. John Moore.

to load his trunk with the most important papers that are printed on that subject; but it has occurred to me, that he would deliver them with a better effect if they were introduced by a few lines from your Lordship, or, at least, a written message to the old gentleman. I don't know whether Mr. King is at Walcot: he would be delighted to have an occasion of addressing his favourite author on this subject. Lady Clive, I am afraid, will scruple at a correspondence with so free a writer; but, whatever mischief his works may do for a better state, in this world they are very entertaining: and that justice, which is everywhere your due to fame, will have a very good effect in England, coming from the pen of a Frenchman, writing at the foot of the Alps.

"I have seen no creature but lawyers for a fortnight past, and I know no news. Robert desires I would make his apology to your Lordship, for suffering himself to be seduced by me, to give me one day at Mitcham, which I am sure you will forgive. Mrs. W. joins me in compliments to Lady Clive and Miss Ducarrel; and I am,

"My dear Lord,

"Yours most sincerely,

"AL. WEDDERBURN.

"Lincoln's Inn Fields,
"9th July, 1773."

The result of this application from the most celebrated writer of the age does not appear. Several letters to Lord Clive, written from different parts of Europe, from foreigners, the posterity of the present age, some of them from persons quite unknown to him, show how widely his fame had spread over the Continent.

Immediately on the rising of Parliament in June, the state of his health carried him to Bath. After a short residence there and at Walcot, he was advised again to visit the Continent. While in London he was consulted by Ministers; and, though he believed that he had cause to complain of the conduct of Lord North in the late transactions, he was still willing, when called upon, to give him his opinion on Indian concerns. Indeed, during the whole course of his life, he was ever most ready and forward to communicate freely the full stores of his experience and reflection, not only to the Court of Directors, but to every administration that he imagined to be disposed to avail themselves of them. He had, in the preceding year, imparted to the Ministry his plan for improving the management of the Company's affairs, both in India and Europe; and by a letter of Lord North's to his Lordship, of the 9th of November this year, soliciting his interest in favour of Mr.

Manship, in an India House election, it appears that Lord Clive had met him just before at Bushy Park, and given his sentiments in conversation on the important question of the instructions proper to be given to the Governor-General and Council of Bengal, who had been recently appointed by the Act of Parliament.

The fatigues of two anxious and exhausting sessions had not improved his health, so shattered before. How long he remained abroad does not appear. During the subsequent session, as all attempts to fix upon him any act of criminality during his first government of Bengal had totally failed, some feeble and malignant efforts were made, through the public papers, to throw suspicion on his conduct during his last administration there. But they were too miserable to be persisted in, or to produce any effect; and were only the last dregs of enmity, meant, perhaps, less to answer their apparent object than to vex and harass the sensitive feelings of a noble mind.*

* These attempts had the effect of making known some instances of Lord Clive's disinterested conduct. The following is an extract of a letter from Mr. Sage to Captain Archibald Swinton (March, 1774), who had written to inquire into the truth of some of these allegations: — "In contradiction of the imputation on Lord Clive, of having accepted of presents when he was last in India, I declare that I never heard of his receiving any, beyond the congratulatory khilats

During the remainder of 1773, and in the following year, which was the last of his life, he

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or dresses[a]; and I remember, when I was Chief at Benares, that Bulwant Sing, when he went to meet Lord Clive at Chupprah, carried with him two very fine diamonds, in order to present them to his Lordship, which I know he brought back again, and declared that Lord Clive had refused to accept them." Letter in *Swinton MSS.*

The testimony of another gentleman, who believed that he had some reason to complain of Lord Clive, and who acknowledges that he was, at the time, prejudiced against him, directly contradicts a similar report. "It will be easily believed," says he, in a letter written after Lord Clive's death, "that Lord Clive, who had been sent to India to reform abuses, had left many enemies in Bengal, who sedulously circulated reports unfavourable to him; among the rest, that he had amassed immense wealth, when he was occupied in making the political arrangements with the Mogul and his ministers. Although mortified and disappointed at what I considered his Lordship's neglect of me, in justice to him and to myself, I must be allowed to say, that after the most diligent inquiries into Lord Clive's negotiations at that time, both with the Mogul and Sujah-u-Dowlah, so far from having made any addition to his fortune at that period, he had refused to accept the present even of a diamond ring. In consequence of some dispute between the Vizier and his deputy, Sir Robert Barker was directed, by the government of Calcutta, to pay Sujah-u-Dowlah a visit at Fiezabad, in which I, of course, accompanied him.[b] It may be supposed that I availed myself of such an opportunity of endeavouring to ascertain the truth or falsehood of the above-mentioned reports. And I do not hesitate to declare, most solemnly, that Sujah-u-Dowlah himself personally

[a] These were all allowed for in his accounts as Governor, which he had presented to the Company.

[b] As Persian Interpreter.

seems to have very much relaxed in the frequency of his epistolary correspondence. But it is a characteristic of his native warmth of attachment, and steady regard for his friends, that a great proportion of the letters written during that period consists of recommendatory letters. Some of them contain instances of very earnest and active exertions in behalf of those whom he befriended. He seems, in particular, to have used great exertions to procure the government of Bombay for General Carnac; and one letter,

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assured me, that it was true he had offered him a large sum of money, together with a casket of valuable jewels; but with great politeness, yet without a moment's hesitation, the offer had been peremptorily refused." — "Few men, under similar circumstances," continues the narrator, "would have refused to have added at least half a million to his fortune. At the instant this information was received, it is possible some little puerile resentment was still lurking in my mind against his Lordship; but, from that time, I have always strenuously contradicted all such groundless reports, and, to the best of my feeble abilities, have done justice to his character." These extracts are not given to do honour to Lord Clive's character; but, when an accusation is made, an answer is looked for, and it is enough if it wipes off a stain. Lord Clive, during his last residence in India, was under a covenant to receive no presents, and that engagement he faithfully fulfilled. In doing so, he merely acted as an honest man. But his upright discharge of his duty, in enforcing the same rule against others, converted into enemies numbers who, by his honour and vigilance, were prevented from benefiting by a custom, that from a change of circumstances had become an intolerable abuse.

written only six weeks before his death, is addressed to Lord North, to forward the interest of his friend Mr. Strachey.

Though the ministers of the Company which he had so nobly served, had requited his services with persecution and ingratitude, the injury that most deeply wounds the most generous spirit, he had many sources of happiness around him. He was happy in his family; he had a numerous circle of friends warmly attached to him; he had a princely fortune and generosity to use it. He enjoyed a reputation of the highest class as a soldier and a statesman. His political influence was considerable; he was still little beyond the middle period of active life. But his residence in India, and the fatigues, mental and bodily, which he had undergone there, had long since ruined his constitution. He suffered from a derangement of the liver, the fatal disease of warm countries, which exposed him to frequent and violent attacks of bile. But above all, he had been subject to excruciating attacks of pain from gall-stones, attended with severe spasms, both before he left India and since his return. To moderate these, he had long called in the dangerous aid of opium; a remedy which, while it alleviates the present suffering, is generally followed by corresponding depression of spirits, and requires to be used in constantly increasing

quantities. He had been driven to the use of this drug when first in India, and probably had never abandoned it, as a few days after his last return to Bengal, writing to Mr. Billers*, the chief at Patna, he asks him to procure for him five or six pounds of the purest opium that could be got: "As this medicine," continues he, "is entirely for my own use, and I find great difficulty in procuring any other than what has been adulterated, I depend on your judgment in purchasing some that is perfectly good and genuine." When he first went to France, we have seen that he had been able in some measure to reduce the quantity which he had been in the habit of using during his previous illness. In November, 1774, when in Berkeley Square, he had a violent return of his complaint. On the 21st and 22d he endured extreme agony, and had recourse, for relief, to powerful doses of laudanum. Though he had perfect command of his faculties, he testified much impatience under his sufferings. It is probable that the excessive acuteness of the paroxysms of pain, arising from the gall-stones, combined with the effects of the medicine which he had used, acting on his feverish irritability, led to the melancholy event which ensued. The feelings of disappointed hope, and wounded dignity, which had long haunted his haughty

* 15th May, 1765.

soul, were but little calculated to soothe him at such a moment. He expired on the 22d of November, soon after he had completed his forty-ninth year, and was buried in his native parish of Moreton-Say.

Lord Clive was one of those extraordinary men who give a character to the period and country in which they live. His name cannot be erased from the history of India, nor from that of Britain. Born in the rank of a private gentleman, and launched out early in life into the wide sea of Indian adventure, he soon far outstript all his competitors in the race of fortune and fame. He was trained in the best of schools, a state of danger, of suffering, and activity. He could not be said to have any master in the art of war; he was, to adopt the language of the great Chatham, "a heaven-born general;" and it was by the boldness and novelty of his measures, the impetuosity of his onset, and the imperturbable obstinacy of his defence, that he confounded his enemies, and changed the hesitating troops under his command into a band of heroes. He left nothing to chance: he foresaw and provided for every thing. Victory seemed to attend him wherever he turned, and no enterprise was too arduous where he was the leader. The same success and the same renown which distinguished him in the Carnatic,

attended him in Bengal. From the date of the battle of Plassey, his reputation in that country was established; and all his negotiations with the native princes were from that day forward concluded more by the influence of his great name, than by the energy of his determined character.

But impetuous and ardent as was the tone of his mind, it is a remarkable part of his praise that he never suffered it to forsake the control of moderation; that he was always able to check and restrain it, and with a keen and cool glance to draw the line between the romantic and the useful, between the dictates of an intoxicating success, and that grand but practicable scheme of conquest and policy, which could give security and permanence to what had been achieved. After he had subdued the rich provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, and had become, in fact, the arbiter of India, a wide scope was opened for his ambition. He was strongly urged by the Emperor of Hindostan to march to Delhi to restore him to the capital and throne of his ancestors. No project could be more alluring to a bold and ambitious man like Clive; and he saw and acknowledged that it was perfectly within his power. But it was anticipating the events of forty years. His well regulated mind perceived that great and flattering as was

the glory of such a transaction, and high as it would raise his name, it would be contrary to sound policy and hurtful to his country. In the very midst of his career of victory he took every occasion to inculcate moderation. He pointed out that Bengal and its dependent provinces, we were able to govern, and could defend by a small well disciplined army, leaving a surplus revenue such as hardly any other country on earth could yield; but that the moment we passed its frontiers and engaged in the contests of the native princes, our very success would be ruinous to our finances; and our armies and other establishments, which must be indefinitely enlarged, would more than swallow up all the produce both of our revenue and our trade. Succeeding events have strikingly confirmed the dictates of his foresight.

Those who would lessen his fame, by representing him as victorious only over Indian armies, forget, that he had the same success against the French and the Dutch, perhaps at that time the two most enlightened and bravest nations in Europe. But it was not at the head of armies alone that his talents were conspicuous. He was a remarkable man in all the circumstances of life. The truth is, that he always carried about with him the instrument of his success,—a fearless mind, acting on a sober and dispassionate

view of human character, and directed to its object with undoubting confidence and unflinching resolution. Aided by his countrymen and by European discipline, he had performed much in the field against native armies. But his success was the same when he stood almost single against his countrymen, and against the soldiers whom he had led to victory. On his last return to Bengal, he found a whole settlement, from the chiefs and leading men, down to the last imported boy, combined to thwart and oppose him. The Governor, the Council, the heads of factories, the leading men in the civil service, were all hostile. Even of the few who had accompanied him as auxiliaries to the East, some tottered. The strongest of human motives, the love of power, the love of reputation, the love of money, were enlisted against him. But he had come determined to perform a great and arduous duty to his country, or to die in the exertion, So he often expresses himself. And though opposed by those who should have aided him, he commenced the odious and invidious work of reform, guided by perfect justice, but with undeviating firmness, and himself exhibiting the most conspicuous proofs of disinterestedness and devotion to his trust. In the course of eighteen months, by the use of unwilling and hostile instruments, supported by his own

powerful genius, which spread a secret awe around him, he subdued the civil combination which had threatened to obstruct all the measures of Government, and to confirm and increase the evil effect of the vicious system that had previously prevailed, so destructive to the internal peace of the country, and to the beneficial management of its civil, its mercantile, and financial concerns.* The same commanding spirit was equally discernible in the bold front with which he met the demands of the army in mutiny. He did not seek to appease them by artful concessions, by holding out hopes, that at a future time their claims might

* It is painful to perceive that a writer so intelligent, so industrious, and so anxious to be impartial, as Mr. Mill, should have conceived what, in several instances, seem to be unjust prejudices against Lord Clive. Thus, he blames him for superseding the Council by the Select Committee. But it is clear that if Lord Clive had allowed his acts to be controlled by the Council, as it was constituted, "the sixteen Governors," he could have effected nothing. All that he did was in spite of them. The majority seem to have been thoroughly corrupt. It was only by means of the Select Committee, which he animated with his own spirit, that any redress of grievances was possible. Lord Clive always saw and wrote that these unwieldy Councils were totally unfit for the government of the country; and every successive legislature has sanctioned his opinion, by reducing their numbers more and more. A large executive council and a large representative body, nobody knows better than Mr. M., are totally different things. If the one is a blessing, the other is a nuisance.

be listened to. He came attended by a firm sense of right, an invincible mind, and by the lustre of his life of glory. He spoke to them only of duty and of submission, and he did not speak in vain. He punished the guilty; he pardoned those who had been misled. He may be said to have triumphed over the very engine of his own fame. Had a sceptic desired an irrefragable proof of the influence of individual superiority of mind, he could have devised none more decisive than those two instances in the life of this illustrious man.

It was an almost necessary consequence of the ardour of his temperament, that he was impatient of opposition. The measures of his government were in general all his own. He did not brook interference, and the ascendancy which he gained over all about him, seldom exposed him to it. In such cases he was often, not merely resolute, but stern. He had in a remarkable degree, what is an uniform attendant on successful talent, the faculty of distinguishing and employing men of merit. During his whole career, his friends were the most eminent men in the country, or within his reach; and what is an honourable distinction, and throws a strong light on his character, they will be found to be the most distinguished, not only for abilities, but for virtue.

So much has already been said of the charges brought against him, on the ground of the presents which he received, that it is hardly necessary to revert to the subject. The accusation is very abhorrent to the lofty and generous character of the man. It has been remarked, that one remarkable feature of his acquisitions is, that they were all of the same description, either his share of prize-money, or of what stood in lieu of it, or gifts bestowed by the prince as a reward for eminent services: for the service first, of raising him to the throne, and next, of securing him in it. All his acquisitions were directly from the state or the prince. These, it may be asserted, were only the natural result of the customs and notions of the time and country; and certainly not more than the Nabob would have bestowed, or been expected to bestow, on any one of his own subjects who had rendered him a similar service. And when we consider the rewards voted by the British Parliament to illustrious public servants, who, having received the pay, the emoluments, the rank, and honours of the service, had no claim on the public purse, but public gratitude, we shall probably be disposed to allow, that the gratifications bestowed on Lord Clive, in lieu of all these, as they were perfectly in unison with the usages of the country where they were granted, were neither im-

moderate nor ill-timed, but such as the situation fully justified.

"Lord Clive's second appointment to India," says Sir John Malcolm*, "though called for by the Proprietors and the public, was warmly opposed by a considerable party in the Direction; and his enemies in that body, recruiting their strength from all whom he had disgraced or punished, subsequently obtained a majority. Neither their efforts, however, nor the combined talent which was arrayed against him in Parliament, could daunt his courage; and he defended his own character with a manliness and eloquence that gave him a complete triumph over all his opponents.

"The character of Lord Clive is associated with the rise of our power in India, and in that view merits much of our attention. Whether we consider his military or political career; the knowledge he displayed of the natives of India, their institutions and government; his efforts to introduce order and principle into what was shapeless and without system; the promptness and courage with which he quelled a mutinous and insubordinate spirit in the military and civil officers of government; his use of victory, the efforts he made and recommended to consolidate

* Political India, vol. ii. p. 29—32.

the strength, and to improve the administration of our empire in the East; we are equally astonished at the extraordinary extent of the powers of his mind. Nevertheless, no man was ever more violently assailed and calumniated by his cotemporaries. When events, over which he had no control, disappointed those hopes which his successes had raised, his opponents took advantage of the change in the public mind, to reproach him with results, which were chiefly to be attributed to their own factions and mismanagement. The prejudices excited by their efforts have been continued by orators and authors, who, treating Indian subjects without reference to those local circumstances and considerations which peculiarly embarrass them, have pleased and satisfied general and uninformed men, by reducing the most complex points of policy to an easy abstract question. The necessity under which those who exercise power in India act, the comparative dangers they have to encounter or avoid, the means they have of executing one plan, or the want of means for another, the feelings and character of princes, and of nations, which they may flatter or offend, are to such persons matters of little consequence. Their conclusions are drawn from simpler sources, and they reject, as prejudiced and polluted, that minute information

and local experience, which, if admitted, might destroy their favourite theories, or cast a doubt upon the validity of those fixed rules and principles by which they consider that the wisdom of every measure ought to be tried and decided.

"With these persons the scene of Indian warfare and policy is degraded to a low level, and the actors reduced to insignificance when compared with those who appear upon the stage in the *western* hemisphere. Nothing in India, if we refer to such authorities, is upon a great scale, except the errors and crimes of British rulers, to the actions of all of whom they apply a standard framed for a wholly different state of society and government. According to such self-constituted judges, the claim of Lord Clive to the admiration of posterity is very equivocal. But his fame will rise the more the particulars of his eventful life are made known. These will prove that his qualities as a statesman almost surpassed those he displayed as a military commander."

If the opinion of those whom he governed can have any weight in forming our judgment, it is certain that by the natives of India, no incurious observers of character, and who felt the influence of his virtues or defects, he was held in the highest respect and reverence. They ad-

mired his success in war, and during his government enjoyed all the ease and security, which it is the first object of government to bestow. Every attempt at oppression or injustice he checked with inexorable firmness. There were indeed complaints heard, but they were the complaints, not of natives who suffered, but of his countrymen, whom his vigour restrained within the limits of justice and right.

His habits in the field were those of a soldier, and simple. Fond of rapid marches and bold attacks, he was an enemy to those incumbrances of needless baggage which so often impede the operations of armies. He shared in the hardships of his soldiers, and was much among them. He trusted for respect, even among the natives of the East, who are supposed to worship pomp, not to parade, but to the splendour diffused around him by his exploits and his renown. The translator of the Seir Mutaqherin, himself a Frenchman, draws a lively contrast between his habits, and those of the justly celebrated Bussy, who, probably on system, adopted a different course. "M. de Bussy," says he, "always wore embroidered clothes, or brocade, with an embroidered hat; and, in days of ceremony, embroidered shoes of black velvet. He was seen in an immense tent, full sufficient for six hundred men, of about thirty feet in elevation; at one

end of this tent he sat on an arm-chair, embroidered with the king's arms, placed upon an elevation, which last was covered by a crimson carpet of embroidered velvet: at his right, but upon back chairs only, sat a dozen of his officers. Over against him, his French guard on horseback, and behind these, his Turkish guards; his table, always in plate, was served with three, often with four services. To this French magnificence he added all the parade and pageant of Hindoostany manners and customs, a numerous set of tents, a pish-qhana; always on an elephant himself, as were all his officers. He was preceded by chopdars on horseback, and by a set of musicians, singing his feats of chivalry, with always two head-chopdars reciting his eulogium. Colonel Clive always wore his regimentals in the field, was always on horseback, and never rode in a palanquin; he had a plentiful table, but no ways delicate, and never more than two services. He used to march mostly at the head of the column, with his aid-de-camps, or was hunting at the right and left. He never wore silks but in town."*

It is to be regretted that, after his return to England, he was induced to enter into the disputes of the India House. They could hardly, in any case, have proved satisfactory; and they

* Seir Mutaqherin, vol. iii. p. 150. *Note.*

certainly, in their consequences, served to embitter his life. Yet it may be said that it was difficult for one who had acted so distinguished a part in the affairs of the Company, at once to renounce all active concern in them; and that he had a natural desire, both to assist in some degree in the management of affairs which he was so well qualified to direct, and to promote, by his influence, the interest of his friends. The parliamentary influence which he acquired must have been very considerable. It would seem that it extended, in different degrees, to Shropshire, Montgomery, Radnor, Monmouth, Shrewsbury, Worcester, Bishops-Castle, Ludlow, Pontefract, to Clare in Ireland, and probably to several other places.

In his politics, though a warm admirer of Lord Chatham, he was a steady adherent of his friend Mr. George Grenville, and of moderate Whig principles. He seldom spoke in the House, except on Indian affairs, and especially in justification of his own conduct. From the few specimens of his speeches that have been preserved, it would appear that they were full of matter, closely argumentative, bold, manly, and energetic. He seems to have acquired more ease in the management and expression of his ideas than could have been expected from one whose previous pursuits had been so different:

his power lay in strong facts and decided principles, plainly but vigorously expressed. Mr. Beaufoy informs us, that "when the attack upon his conduct had called into action the powers of his mind, his eloquence was such as has not been often surpassed."* One who knew him, speaking of the same period, says, "Not long after this event I was fortunate enough to meet the great Lord Chatham at the chase, near Bonnet, and to hear him declare that Lord Clive's speech on that subject was one of the most finished pieces of eloquence he had ever heard in the House of Commons." It was the natural eloquence of a powerful mind thrown into motion by unworthy accusations, of a man who was master of his subject, eager to persuade, and who used the simplest words to express the strongest ideas.

In private life he was much beloved, and possessed the warm affection of a wide circle of friends, many of whom had been deeply indebted to his generosity; for no man ever employed a princely fortune with more liberality. He was steady in his attachments, and seldom lost a friend; Mr. Vansittart, who was sore harassed between his friendship for Clive and his connection with Mr. Sulivan, is perhaps the only in-

* Biog. Britannica, 2d edit., *art.* Clive.

stance of consequence. As he was a steady friend, he was a resolute enemy, but without vindictiveness. His gift of 70,000*l.* for the support of officers and men invalided in the Company's service in India, must rank among the noblest of living benefactions.

"His person," we are told, "was of the largest of the middle size; his countenance inclined to sadness, and the heaviness of his brow imparted an unpleasing expression to his features. It was a heaviness that arose, not from the prevalence of the unsocial passions (for of these few men had a smaller share), but from a natural fulness in the flesh above the eyelid. His words were few, and his manner among strangers was reserved. Yet it won the confidence of men, and gained admission to the heart. Among his intimate friends he had great pleasantry and jocoseness, and on some occasions was too open."*

By his wife, Margaret Maskelyne, he left Edward, the present Earl of Powis, born March 7. 1754; Rebecca, born September 15. 1760; Charlotte, born January 15. 1762; Margaret, born August 15. 1763, and Robert, born August 31. 1769.

At the time of his death he was Lord Lieu-

* Biog. Brit., ut supra.

tenant and Custos Rotulorum of the counties of Salop and of Montgomery, Major-General in the East Indies, and representative in Parliament for the town of Shrewsbury. He was a member of the Royal Society, and had been honoured with the degree of Doctor of Laws.

India has produced many illustrious men both in his time and since; but none of them has yet obscured or equalled the fame of Clive.

Before concluding, it may be proper to say a few words as to his views of Indian policy; and it is not to be forgotten, that whatever he undertook during his residence in India, he effected. It is much to be regretted, that his health drove him out of the country, when he had nearly made up his mind to remain there another year; a period, short as it was, in which he might have done much to consolidate and give effect to the system which he had established. The state of the European population, eager to be rich, and fretting under every restraint placed on their cupidity, required a hand as firm and steady as his to keep it in check. It has, indeed, been affirmed, that he had no capacity for a comprehensive scheme; including any moderate anticipation of the future. This assertion seems to have been hazarded on very inadequate grounds. He made many communications at various times to the Ministry and to the Court of Directors.

These, though chiefly confined to the local and temporary objects for which they were asked, to plans for remedying defects in the civil or military establishments, as they were felt, show no deficiency in comprehensive views, but are full of the deepest observation. It may be safely affirmed, that the views of no statesman of the times (if we except Burke, who is an exception to every thing,) contain more political and practical foresight directed to Indian affairs. And a proof of this is, that many of the plans which he at that early period proposed, have since been gradually adopted. He did not conceal his opinion either from his friends or in Parliament, that he saw no public body either in England or India duly competent to the administration of our concerns in the East. He early came to a conclusion that "the charters granted for the guidance of a limited company of merchants, could not be adequate to the government of an extensive empire." * At the same time, he justly regarded the British Ministry, the Court of Directors, and the Court of Proprietors, as all of them profoundly ignorant of Indian concerns, and as being, from their composition, devised for totally different objects, very unfit to direct them. These elements, however, could

* Historical Views, &c. p. 57.

not be got rid of, and it was evident that any plan proposed must include them as a portion of it. He always contended, that the first step towards an improved management of our concerns in India must be a reform at home, in the constitution of the Court of Directors and Court of Proprietors. He proposed some changes, not because they were sufficient, but because they were practicable, and suggested that the Directors, instead of being changed annually, should remain in office for several years; and that the business, instead of coming on in the first instance before all, should be arranged in small Committees. He suggested, that two of the Directors should be appointed by the Crown, an idea in which we see the germ of the Board of Control. In India, he saw that Councils of sixteen equals, were hot-beds of dissension, rendered the satisfactory transaction of business impossible, and responsibility null, by diffusing it. He conceived, that a Council of not more than five persons was infinitely preferable; that the Government of Bengal should, in cases of exigency, have the power of issuing orders to the Governments of the other Presidencies; and that in certain cases the President should have the power, on his own responsibility, of acting contrary to the opinion of his Council: the higher classes of English, those concerned in the

government, and at the head of departments, he wished to restrain from trade altogether, and to pay them ample allowances; to this purpose he would have devoted the proceeds of the Salt-tax, for such in reality, under another name, were the gains of the Society of Trade: if their large salaries did not make them honest, they at least left no pretence for dishonesty, and turned more strongly against them the moral feelings of their judges: the Company's civil servants he did not wish to employ in the lower details of the financial or judicial establishments: he was earnestly bent on changing as little of the native institutions as possible; to do at least no harm; to govern India by Indians; to leave things as they were till we saw our way, reserving for the English only the reins of government, the general superintendence, a controlling and directing power, and the command of the military force. The system which he found, and under which, as all Europeans then on the spot agreed, the country had reached a degree of prosperity hardly to be equalled elsewhere in the East, he wished to retain. In regard to the revenue, a matter of so much practical consequence to the happiness of every country, he held that the taxes were not to be extended beyond the state in which we found them, without the greatest caution; he suggested that Government should

grant leases of land, to prevent the exactions to which the ryots were exposed in the laying on of the annual impost. To the natives he wished to leave the internal trade, confining the English to the foreign import and export trade, as formerly: he was anxious that the natives should have the entire management of their own concerns, unducurbed as far as possible by the intrusion of Europeans, whose misconduct, which in many instances had been carried to a grievous excess, there was at that time no judicial or political machinery for keeping in order. He did not, however, adopt the wild idea of introducing English laws into a country for which they had never been framed. With more wisdom than has even yet been shown by the Legislature, he recommended that the Company should be authorised to send out an Attorney-General with some able lawyers, (not certainly, however, the most proper persons, especially if a majority,) to new model and regulate the Courts of Justice, and that, with the assistance of the Governor-General and Council, they should form a system of regulations proper for our settlements, pointing out the defects that existed, as well as the proper remedies. He concluded with perfect truth, "that the attempt to introduce the English laws throughout our possessions in India would be absurd and impracticable." He foresaw, from

the spirit of the times, that expense was the rock on which the Government was likely to split, and used every means in his power to raise barriers against it. It was partly this which made him recommend that we should confine ourselves to a rich but limited territory, a sma army, and few but well-paid English servanst and not plunge into the wide sea of India politics. He foretold, that if every thing was to be done directly by Company's servants, and if the expenses of fortifications and cantonments continued on the extravagant scale then in operation, the revenues of India, far from affording a surplus to be conveyed to England, would not long suffice even to support our various establishments on the spot. His predictions were soon verified; though there was but an inconsiderable change in the amount of the actual revenue, yet the expenses of the army, of buildings, fortifications, commissariat of every department, joined to the ill-conducted wars at Madras, had, in the course of a few years, increased so much, that the large free produce which he had left was totally absorbed. Indeed, such is the natural course of human affairs; and the only question is, whether even an energy like his, could have rendered possessions so distant permanently productive. He saw the means of defending our possessions against the native

powers, by well-timed attention to their operations; but the French, a more formidable enemy, had only recently lost their Indian possessions, and he looked forward to more imminent danger from their designs, especially if by their means the resistance, then only threatened in America, became successful: for that America, he observes, will sooner or latter become independent, there can be no question*: an observation which, in 1772, when both the Government and the nation looked upon any resistance to be made by the Americans as futile, evinced no common sagacity.

To examine the various plans which he furnished, both in India and Europe, for the improvement of the Company's affairs and establishments, as well as for the couduct of their external relations, though to one who traced the progress of Indian policy it might be no unimportant employment, would occupy more time than could be afforded in a Memoir like this. The materials are sufficiently ample. Lord Clive, even when on the worst terms with the managing servants of the Company, uniformly felt a strong attachment and warm gratitude to the body itself, to which his early feelings had bound him; and he was always ready to pour out his know-

* Historical View of Plans, &c. p. 62.

ledge for its benefit. It was a subject in which he was at home, and he felt a laudable pleasure in the hopes of benefiting his early patrons, and the nations he had conquered and ruled, by the matured fruits of his observation and experience.

# APPENDIX.

## AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

## THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

AND THE

## RIGHT HON. LORD CLIVE,

RESPECTING

## THE FUND

ESTABLISHED FOR RELIEF OF THE HONOURABLE COMPANY'S MILITARY,

*Dated April* 6. 1770:

TOGETHER WITH

## GENERAL REGULATIONS

FOR

TRANSACTING THE BUSINESS OF THE SAID FUND,

AND

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PENSIONERS.

# AGREEMENT

## BETWEEN THE EAST INDIA COMPANY AND THE RIGHT HON. LORD CLIVE.

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Preamble.

THIS Indenture, made the 6th day of April, in the tenth year of the reign of our sovereign Lord George the Third, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, king, defender of the faith, and in the year of our Lord 1770; between the United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies, of the one part, and the Right Honourable Robert Lord Clive, Baron of Plassey, in the kingdom of Ireland, and Knight of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, of the other part. Whereas Meer Mahomed Jaffier Cawn, deceased, late Nabob of the kingdom or province of Bengal, did before his death, in the presence of three witnesses, (to wit) Najim al Dowla, his son, Lady Begam, his wife, and Meha Rajah Nuncomar, according to the form and manner of testamentary acts used in that country, bequeath unto the said Robert Lord Clive, out of the monies and effects which the said nabob had in his possession, the sum of three lacks of rupees, 50,000 rupees in money, 50,000 rupees in jewels, and one lack in gold mohurs, in all five lacks of rupees, as by the contents of the said bequest, contained in three certificates, made by the aforesaid witnesses, in the Persian language, and the translations thereof into

the English language, now in the custody of the said Company, may more fully appear: And whereas, at the time of the said Meer Jaffier's death, the said Robert Lord Clive was at sea, on his voyage from England to India, and after his arrival in the province of Bengal, Najim al Dowla, eldest son of the said Meer Jaffier, did, agreeably to the commands of his said father, pay to the said Robert Lord Clive the said five lacks of sicca rupees, of the value of 62,833*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* sterling, which the said Robert Lord Clive paid into the said East India Company's treasury at Calcutta, at different times, in the year of our Lord 1766, and thereupon notes were signed to his Lordship for the same five lacks of sicca rupees, carrying interest after the rate of 8*l.* per cent. per annum sterling, until paid: And whereas the said Robert Lord Clive, being zealous for the prosperity of the said Company, the security of their territories and territorial revenues in India belonging to them, and their trade and commerce, which greatly depend on the bravery and conduct of the said Company's troops, and considering that the establishment of a provision for such of the officers and private men employed in the Company's service as should be disabled by age, war, or disease contracted during their service, would tend to induce fit persons to enter into the said service, and encourage the bravery of the soldiery employed therein, hath proposed to the Court of Directors of the said United Company to appropriate the interest of the said five lacks of rupees for the support of a certain number of officers, non-commission officers, and private men, in the service of the said Company, who from wounds, length of service, or diseases contracted during their service, were unable or unfit to serve any longer, and whose for-

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tunes might be too scanty to afford the officers a decent, and the private men a comfortable, subsistence in their native country; and also to make some provision for the widows of such officers and private men, as should have been entitled to the said bounty, or whose husbands should have lost their lives in the said United Company's service: And whereas Syf-ul Dowla, the present Nabob of Bengal aforesaid, hath given to the said United Company the sum of three lacks of rupees, as an addition to the above-mentioned fund: And whereas the said three lacks of rupees were carried to account in the said United Company's treasury, in the month of April, 1767, and the said Company's note for the said three lacks of sicca rupees, amounting to the sum of 37,700*l.* sterling, carrying interest after the rate of 8*l.* by the hundred by the year, was issued from the said Company's treasury at Calcutta, payable to the said Robert Lord Clive: And whereas the said Robert Lord Clive hath also proposed that the said Court of Directors, and their successors, shall be perpetual trustees of the said fund of five lacks of rupees, as well as of the said three lacks of rupees, for the due application and appropriation of the interest and produce thereof, which said trust the said Court of Directors have consented and agreed to accept of: And whereas it has been agreed by and between the said Robert Lord Clive and the said Court of Directors, that the said eight lacks of rupees shall, from the 29th day of September, which was in the year of our Lord 1766, carry interest at and after the said rate of 8*l.* by the hundred by the year, upon and subject to the several trusts, conditions, agreements, and provisoes herein-after mentioned: And whereas the said Robert Lord Clive, in pursuance of the said

agreement, hath delivered up the said cash notes for five lacks, and three lacks of rupees, to the said Court of Directors, to be cancelled: Now this Indenture witnesseth, that for the better and more effectually carrying the aforesaid agreement into execution, it is hereby mutually covenanted, concluded, declared, and agreed, by and between the said Robert Lord Clive and the said United Company, that the said eight lacks of rupees shall remain in the hands or treasury of the said United Company, who shall yearly, and every year, at their house or office in Leadenhall Street, London, or in any other house or place where the business of the said Company shall be transacted and carried on, pay and allow the sum of 8042*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* of lawful money of Great Britain, for and in lieu of interest of the said eight lacks of rupees, being after the rate of 8*l.* by the hundred by the year, to such persons, in such proportions, and for such purposes, as are herein-after mentioned of and concerning the same. And it is further covenanted, concluded, and agreed upon, between the said parties, that the Court of Directors of the said United Company, and their successors, shall be perpetual trustees, subject to the agreements and provisoes herein-after contained, of the said fund of eight lacks of rupees, for the due application and appropriation of the interest and produce thereof, from the 29th day of September last past, to and amongst, and for the relief and maintenance of European officers and soldiers, who shall become invalids or superannuated in the said United Company's service, and of their widows, and also the widows of such officers and soldiers as shall die in the said United Company's service, in the shares, dividends, and proportions following; (that is to say,) to all com-

The eight lacks to bear 8 per cent. interest.

Interest to be paid in London.

Court of Directors and their successors to be perpetual trustees.

The trust to commence from the 29th of September, 1769.

To be for relief and maintenance of European officers and soldiers, invalids or superannuated, their widows, or widows of

missioned and staff or warrant officers, one moiety or half part of the ordinary stated pay they were respectively entitled to whilst in commission or service; to all serjeants, corporals, and private men, the like pay as is allowed and payable to the out-pensioners, of the same ranks or degrees, belonging to Chelsea Hospital; and to the several widows of all such officers and soldiers, one quarter or fourth part of the ordinary stated pay their respective husbands were entitled to when in the said United Company's service, yearly and every year, during their several and respective natural lives. But it is declared, that the provisions hereby intended for such widows shall be paid upon such certificates and testimonials only as the Court of Directors for the time being shall think reasonable or necessary to entitle them thereunto, and shall be payable during their respective widowhoods, but no longer; and in case of their intermarriages, then such provision shall from thenceforth cease. Provided always, and it is hereby further concluded and agreed upon, by and between the said parties, that no officer or soldier is to be or shall be entitled to any bounty or provision, under or by virtue of these presents, unless he shall, in the judgment of the Court of Directors of the said United Company for the time being, be found disabled by wounds, or rendered incapable by age or other accidents, and unless he shall produce a certificate from and under the hand of his commanding officer of his being an invalid, and rendered incapable of further service in India, together with an approbation of such certificate by the Governor and Council of the Presidency where such officer shall have served; but nevertheless, if any officer or soldier in the said Company's service, residing or being in England, shall apply to the said

officers and soldiers dying in the service.

Commissioned, staff, or warrant officers, to have half the ordinary stated pay they were entitled to whilst in service.

Serjeants, corporals, and private men, the like pay as the Chelsea pensioners of the same degrees.

Widows of officers and soldiers, one fourth of the ordinary stated pay their husbands enjoyed whilst in service.

To be paid yearly and every year during their natural lives.

Widows to be admitted on such testimonials only as the Court of Directors shall approve.

To continue during widowhood, and no longer.

No officer or soldier to be admitted, unless disabled by wounds, or rendered inca-

pable by age or other accidents. The Directors to be judges.

Officers and soldiers must produce a certificate from their commanding officer, of their being invalids and unfit for service in India; and an approbation of such certificate from the Governor and Council. The Court may admit petitioners in the Company's service residing in England, if they shall judge them fit objects.

A colonel must swear he is not possessed of, or entitled to, real and personal estate to the value of 4,000*l.*; a lieutenant-colonel, of 3,000*l.*; a major, of 2,500*l.*; a captain, of 2,000*l.*; a lieutenant, of 1,000*l.*; and an ensign of 750*l.*

Widows must lay before the Court satisfactory evidence that their respective husbands did not die worth the sums above specified.

Court of Directors to be admitted to the said bounty or provision, the said Court of Directors shall admit such officer or soldier thereunto, if they shall adjudge him to be a proper object of such bounty. Provided also, and it is hereby further concluded and agreed upon, that the bounty or provision hereby intended for and in favour of the said officers, is only to extend to such of them as shall be obliged, through any of the misfortunes above-mentioned, to return to England in indigent circumstances; and that all and every such officers applying for such bounty shall, previous to their becoming entitled thereto, according to their several ranks or commissions, make oath in the most solemn manner, before the Governor and Council, to the purport and effect following; (that is to say,) a colonel shall swear that he, or any person or persons in trust for him, is or are not seised or possessed of or entitled unto any real and personal estate, to the amount in value together of 4,000*l.*; a lieutenant-colonel, to the amount in value of 3,000*l.*; a major, to the amount in value of 2,500*l.*; a captain, to the amount in value of 2,000*l.*; a lieutenant, to the amount in value of 1,000*l.*; and an ensign or cornet, to the amount in value of 750*l.* And in case of the death of any officer of the ranks above mentioned in the said United Company's service, the widow of every such officer, before she shall be admitted to partake of the said bounty or pension, shall produce and lay before the Court of Directors of the said United Company such evidence as to them shall seem reasonable, that her husband, under whom she derives such claim, did not die seised or possessed of real and personal estate to the amount herein-before specified, according to his respective rank in the said service. Provided nevertheless, and it is further con-

cluded and agreed upon, that the several persons applying for the benefit of the said fund or bounty shall be admitted and become entitled thereto, according to the times of their respective arrivals in England; and in case any disputes or differences shall happen or arise, touching or concerning the qualifications of persons claiming right to pensions under these presents, or the distribution thereof, or the times of their being respectively entitled thereto, such differences or disputes shall, from time to time, be decided and adjusted by the Court of Directors of the said United Company, and not otherwise. And whereas the interest due from the said United Company upon the said cash notes herein-before mentioned amounted, on the 29th day of September last, to the sum of 24,128*l.*, now it is hereby further concluded and agreed, by and between the said parties to these presents, that the said sum of 24,128*l.* shall remain in the hands of the said United Company in India, and shall be deemed and considered as capital, and shall carry interest from the said 29th day of September last, at and after the rate of 8*l.* by the hundred by the year, which interest or yearly produce thereof shall be from time to time paid, disposed of, and distributed by the Court of Directors of the said United Company for the time being, in the first place, for the discharging all incident charges and expenses attending carrying into execution the fund hereby established, and subject thereto, unto and amongst such objects of charity, belonging to the said United Company's military service, or the widows or families of such objects, as the said Court of Directors shall in their discretion think fit. Provided also, and the said United Company do hereby covenant, promise, and agree, to and with the said Robert Lord Clive,

To be entitled from the times of their arrival in England.

All disputes or doubts concerning qualifications of petitioners, distribution, or times of payment, to be decided by the Court of Directors only.

Interest on the eight lacks due 29th September 1769, value 24,128*l.*, to be erected into capital, and to carry 8 per cent. interest from that time.

The contingent fund is to be appropriated for all incident expenses of carrying the fund into execution, and for such objects of charity belonging to the military, their widows or families, as the Court shall think fit.

If the Company should lose or part with their territorial possessions in Bengal, so that Lord Clive's jaghire should cease before the term agreed upon, or if the Company should cease to maintain a military force in India before 1784, in either case the five lacks to be restored to Lord Clive or his executors, but chargeable with the proportion of all the pensions assigned on the eight lacks generally.

his executors, administrators, and assigns, that in case the said United Company shall at any time hereafter, by any means whatsoever, otherwise than by the fate of war, be dispossessed or deprived of, or part with their territorial possessions in Bengal, and the revenues arising thereby, so that the jaghire granted unto and now enjoyed by the said Robert Lord Clive shall, during the term agreed upon between the said United Company and the said Robert Lord Clive for the continuation thereof, cease to be paid unto his said Lordship, or his assigns, or in case the said United Company shall, at any time before the year of our Lord 1784, cease to employ and maintain in their immediate pay and service a military force in the East Indies, then and in either of the said cases, the said United Company shall and will forthwith pay unto the said Robert Lord Clive, his executors, administrators, or assigns, at their treasury in Calcutta aforesaid, the full sum of five lacks of sicca rupees, to and for his and their own proper use and benefit, but subject nevertheless with the interest of the aforesaid three lacks of rupees, in the proportion the said respective sums bear to each other, to the payment of all such pensions and annuities, as shall, at the time either of the aforesaid contingencies shall happen, be payable out of or chargeable upon the said trust fund, which said pensions and annuities it is hereby fully understood and agreed, shall continue to be paid and payable out of the interest of the said eight lacks of rupees, or such part thereof as shall be wanting and necessary, during the lives of the several persons then entitled thereto. And it is hereby further concluded and agreed upon, between the said parties to these presents, that in case, at any time after the commencement of the said year of our Lord 1784, it shall so

If the Company employ no military force in

India after 1784, the interest of the eight lacks to be applied for relief of officers and seamen, invalids or superannuated, and the widows of such of them as shall die in their service, during widowhood only.

happen that the said United Company shall have no military force in their actual pay or service in the East Indies, that then and in such case the interest and produce of the said trust fund of eight lacks of rupees shall from thenceforth, from time to time, be applied, paid, and distributed towards the support, relief, and provision of marine officers and seamen who shall become invalids or superannuated in the said United Company's service, and the widows of such of them as shall die in the said service, during their respective widowhoods only, in such shares and proportions, in manner and form, as, in case such event shall happen, shall be concluded and agreed upon between the said United Company and the said Robert Lord Clive, or his legal representative or representatives. And lastly, it is hereby expressly stipulated and agreed, and the said United Company do hereby covenant with the said Robert Lord Clive, his executors, administrators, and assigns, that in case it shall happen that the said United Company, after the commencement of the said year of our Lord 1784, shall cease to employ a military force in their actual pay and service in the East Indies, and also ships for carrying on their trade and commerce, then and in such case, as soon as the said event shall happen, the said United Company shall and will pay unto the said Robert Lord Clive, his executors, administrators, or assigns, for his and their own use, at their treasury in Calcutta aforesaid, the full sum of five lacks of sicca rupees, but subject nevertheless with the interest of the said three lacks of rupees, in the proportion the said sums bear to each other, to the payment of all such pensions and annuities, for the lives of the persons then entitled thereto only, as shall, at the time such event shall happen, be payable out of or charge-

If after 1784, the Company shall cease to employ either troops or shipping, they shall repay Lord Clive, or his executors, the five lacks chargeable with the pensions that may then be upon them.

able upon the said trust fund, according to the true intent and meaning of these presents. In witness whereof the said United Company have hereunto affixed their common seal, and the said Robert Lord Clive hath set his hand and seal, the day and year first above written.

(Company's Seal.) (L. S.) CLIVE.

Sealed and delivered, being first duly stamped, by the within-named Robert Lord Clive, in the presence of

RICHARD HOLT,
THOMAS MORTON.

# GENERAL REGULATIONS

## FOR TRANSACTING THE BUSINESS OF THE MILITARY FUND.

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At a Court of Directors of the East India Company,

*14th January*, 1824.

THE Court having had under their consideration the regulations established for transacting the business of the Military Fund; resolved, That the following regulations be now established, and that, for the future, the paymaster do govern himself thereby in conducting the business of the fund.

1. That every petitioning officer and soldier shall produce a certificate from his commanding officer of his being an invalid, and rendered incapable of further service in India, together with an approbation of such certificate by the Governor and Council of the Presidency where such officer or soldier shall have served.

2. That every commissioned officer shall previously make oath before the Governor and Council, *viz.* a colonel, that he or any person in trust for him, is not possessed of or entitled to real and personal estate to the value of 4,000*l.*; a lieutenant-colonel, of 3,000*l.*; a major, of 2,500*l.*; a captain, of 2,000*l.*; a lieutenant, of 1,000*l.*; and an ensign, of 750*l.*; and shall furnish a declaration, acknowledging themselves

to be acquainted with the resolution of the Court of Directors, which precludes all officers who are admitted pensioners on the military fund from returning again to the service.

3. That all commissioned officers and widows of commissioned officers, admitted on the Fund, shall receive pensions at the rates of infantry pay, according to the respective ranks of the parties.

4. That all non-commissioned officers and privates shall be paid according to the rates allowed by resolution of court of the 14th April, 1819.

5. That all officers shall be entitled from the periods up to which they may have been paid in India, or from the date of their pay on furlough ceasing; and all non-commissioned officers and privates, from the times of their respective debarkations in England.

6. That commissioned officers and their widows shall be paid their pensions in arrears, and shall receive them at the Company's office in London only, either in person or by power of attorney, half-yearly, at Midsummer and at Christmas.

7. That non-commissioned officers and private men shall, immediately upon admission, be paid in advance, for the remaining number of days of the current half year; and at the expiration thereof, every succeeding half year in advance.

8. That non-commissioned officers and private men residing within twenty-five miles of London, shall be paid at the Company's office in London, and not otherwise.

9. That such non-commissioned officers and private men as reside at a greater distance from London, or in Scotland or Ireland, be made at such times, by such persons, and in such manner, as the Court of Directors shall from time to time find convenient, in person, and not otherwise.

10. That non-commissioned officers and private men shall receive on admission a certificate thereof, signed by the paymaster of this fund, containing a description of such pensioner, his age, and other particulars; which certificate the pensioner shall exhibit to the persons directed to pay them each time of payment, and no pension shall be paid unless this certificate is produced by the pensioner.

11. That country pensioners shall receive in advance for the first half year, from Midsummer or Christmas next ensuing the date of their admission, on producing the above certificate only to the persons appointed to pay them; but in the months of October, or April after receiving such first half-yearly payment, every pensioner shall make two affidavits, of the same tenor and date, before a magistrate, conformably to the printed instructions he shall receive from the paymaster of the fund; one of which affidavits must be transmitted to the said paymaster in London, in the months of October and April in each year, the other, together with the pensioner's certificate of admission, must be exhibited to the person that shall be empowered to pay him.

12. That no pensioner shall be paid in the country, unless the above-mentioned affidavit has been timely received by the paymaster of this fund in London.

13. That if a pensioner does not claim his pension in person, or transmit an affidavit for three half years, he shall be considered as dead; but if such pensioner shall afterwards furnish satisfactory proof of his identity to the Court of Directors, he shall be again placed on the pension list, and be allowed arrears for two years, but for no longer period.

14. That widows of commissioned officers must lay before the Court such evidence as to them shall

seem reasonable, that their husbands, under whom they derive their claim, did not die possessed of real and personal estate to the amount specified in Regulation the second, according to their respective ranks in the service; and further, that they had not, at the period of their marriage, property settled upon them by their husbands, which, together with the property left by the husband, would exclude them from the benefit of the fund.

15. That widows of commissioned officers be paid in person, or by power of attorney, at the Company's office in London only.

16. That the widows of officers and soldiers, provided it appears they were married previous to their husbands becoming pensioners on this fund, shall receive the pension at the rates fixed by the deed when this fund was originally instituted.

17. That widows of non-commissioned officers and private men shall prove their marriage to the satisfaction of the Court of Directors.

18. That widows of non-commissioned officers and private men, residing within twenty-five miles of London, shall be paid at the Company's office in London only; and those who live at a greater distance shall be paid in the same manner, and upon the same half-yearly affidavits, as the men; and, in either case, they shall receive in person, and not otherwise.

19. That pensions granted to widows shall continue during their widowhood, and no longer.

20. That the pensions of commissioned officers and their widows shall be paid net, without any fee or deduction whatever.

21. That the pensions of such non-commissioned officers and their widows as receive in person in

London, shall be paid net, without any fee or deduction whatever.

*22.* That such of the non-commissioned officers and private men, and such of their widows as are paid in the country, shall each time allow one shilling to the person that pays them, for his trouble.

*23.* That in cases of insanity, satisfactory proof be made thereof to the Court of Directors, and the pension paid to a churchwarden, in behalf of the parish, towards the pensioner's subsistence.

*24.* That no pensioner, on their first admission to this fund, shall be allowed to receive arrears of pension for more than two years back from the date of their application.

# INSTRUCTIONS

## FOR THE PENSIONERS ON THE FUND ESTABLISHED FOR RELIEF OF THE HONOURABLE EAST INDIA COMPANY'S MILITARY, ETC.

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All non-commissioned officers and private soldiers admitted pensioners on the above fund, residing within twenty-five miles of London, must receive in person at the Company's office there; and such as live at a greater distance from London than twenty-five miles, as well as those in Scotland and Ireland, are hereby required and directed, that early in the months of April and October, every year, they do apply themselves to one of his Majesty's justices of peace in the neighbourhood where they reside, and make two affidavits of the following tenor, and of one date (which affidavits the Court of Directors of the East India Company request the said magistrate to sign and date), *viz.*:—

"———————— came before me, one of his
" Majesty's justices of the peace for the county of
" ————, and made oath, that he was admitted a
" pensioner on the Military Fund of the Honourable
" East India Company the ——— day of ————
" 18—; was then aged about ———— years, and
" was discharged for ————————, and

" now lives in the parish of ———, in the county
" of ———.

" *Sworn before me,*
" *this* —— *day of* ———, 18—."

One of the two affidavits, drawn according to the above form, sworn before, dated, and attested by a magistrate, is to be sent by the general post, directed (until further orders) " To the Paymaster of the " Honourable East-India Company's Military Fund, " at the East-India House, London;" the other affidavit, of the same tenor and date, the pensioner must keep, to show, together with his certificate of admission, signed by the paymaster, to the person who shall be empowered to pay him in the country.

The above-mentioned affidavits must be made and transmitted to London in April and in October, so as to be received by the Company's paymaster full two months before the 24th of June and the 25th of December respectively. They must be drawn on one piece of paper, big enough to fold up in the form of a letter, and the above direction wrote on the back thereof, to avoid unnecessary expense of postage.

No pensioner will be paid unless the above-mentioned affidavit has been timely received, twice a year, by the paymaster of this fund in London; nor unless the other affidavit of the same date, as well as the certificate of admission, are produced by the pensioner every time of payment.

All pensioners are to take particular notice, that neither the whole nor any part of their pension money will be paid at any time, nor under any pretence whatever, to any other person or persons than themselves only; consequently they cannot commission or empower any one to receive for them; and no re-

ceipts, acknowledgments, or assignments for money any pensioner may borrow on his pension will be discharged, or paid any regard to, by the paymaster of this fund. But proper care will be taken that the pensioners themselves shall be regularly paid twice a year, in whatever part of England, Scotland, or Ireland they may reside, provided they duly observe the orders and directions contained in the instructions.

Every pensioner who receives in the country, is to allow one shilling, each time of payment, to the person he is paid by.

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## ERRATUM.

The portrait of Lord Clive is by Dance, R. A., and not by Sir Joshua Reynolds, as is erroneously stated in some of the impressions.

THE END.

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